

# MISCAPE

ART AND LITERARY MAGAZINE



2007



# INSCAPE

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inscape  
art & literary magazine

## IN-SCAPE (N.)

The essential, distinctive, and revolutionary quality of a thing: "Here is the inscape, the epiphany, the moment of truth." (Madison Smartt Bell).



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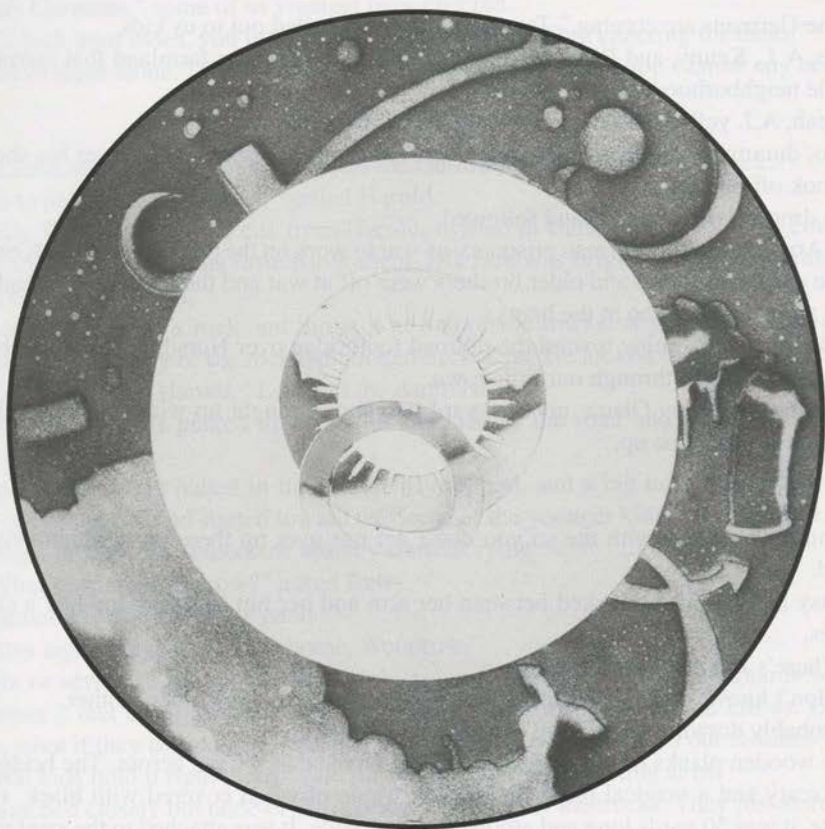
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**STEPHEN CREECH**

*Eternal Sunshine for the Cheese Dreams*

Intaglio Print

*(Inscape Art Award, First Place)*

**The American Shaman***(Chapter 1)*

1944

"The Germans are coming," Tommy Farnsworth called out to us kids.

Me, A.J., Kenny, and Billy Wayne were playing war on the farmland that surrounded our little neighborhood of 3 or 4 streets.

"Yeah, A.J. yelled back. A whole battalion of Germans over there!"

"No, dummy, not pretend Germans. Real Germans," Tommy yelled over his shoulder as he took off on a dead run.

We dropped our toy guns and followed.

The Army trucked in German prisoners-of-war to work on the tobacco farms in Kentucky because our dads, uncles and older brothers were off at war and there weren't enough men around to get the tobacco in the barns.

I chased after Tommy toward the railroad footbridge over Hurstbourne Creek that led to the main highway through our little town.

Betsy and Hailey Ohara, my backyard neighbors, caught up with me. Betsy slowed down, and scooped me up.

"Connor, you stay with me so you don't get run over up there on the highway," she ordered.

Betsy had me firmly locked between her arm and her hip, carrying me like a sack of potatoes.

"Where's Jessie?" asked Hailey.

"I don't know," I said, squirming to get loose. Jessie was my older brother.

"Probably drawing, or reading a book," said Betsy.

The wooden planks of the roofed footbridge creaked as we ran across. The bridge was both a scary and a magical place for us kids. Made of wood covered with black, smelly creosote, it was 50 yards long and around five feet wide. It was attached to the steel girders that supported the railroad structure and perched directly under the Louisville and Nashville tracks. Hot cinders danced around the bridge's wooden railings when a locomotive passed overhead.

"Watch out where you step," A.J. yelled, "the hobos have been crawling down here and taking shits again."

"Watch your language A.J., or I'm going to tell your mother," yelled Betsy.

The sun blinded me for an instant when we reached the end of the bridge. When my eyes adjusted, I saw the first Army truck going by loaded down with the German POWs.

"Some of them don't look any older than us," said Betsy.

"They're all so handsome," said Hailey.

"Shut up," said Harold Martin, "those dirty Nazis are the ones who killed my Dad!"

"And my Uncle!" yelled Lonnie Harley.

Billy Wayne let out a howl.

"What are you crying about, Billy Wayne?" Betsy asked him.

"They killed my Daddy too."

Hailey took Billy Wayne in her arms. That quieted him down some. I didn't know Billy Wayne's Daddy was killed in the war. I wondered why he still liked to play war with us?

As the trucks rolled by, the German POWs smiled and waved over the rails.

"Yay Germans," some of us younger ones cheered.

"I'll kick your asses, you little shits," Harold yelled. "Quit cheering for them!"

"Leave them alone," Betsy yelled, "they're just babies. They don't know any better."

We continued to cheer and wave, and the Germans smiled and waved back.

"Go to hell, you dirty Nazis," yelled Harold.

Billy Wayne, taking his cue from Harold, twisted in Carl Sue's arms so he could see the Germans. He shook his little fist at them. His face was bright red, and big tears were rolling down his cheeks.

Harold picked up a rock and threw it at one of the trucks. A young German soldier ducked out of the way of the rock and looked back at us. He looked more sad than mad.

"Come on," said Harold. "Let's get the damn Nazis."

Some of the kids picked up rocks off the side of the road and peppered the Army trucks.

One of the trucks halted in the middle of the road, and a big burly American soldier rolled out of the cab and started toward us. Some of the younger kids ran. I couldn't. Betsy had a tight hold on me. Woodrow Manley started crying.

"What's wrong Woodrow?" asked Betsy.

"Somebody pooped in my pants!"

Betsy sighed in disgust. "Go home, Woodrow."

Six or seven truckloads of enemy soldiers and only a few American guards were no more than 2 feet away. I was scared they would jump off the truck and kill us. Or even worse, what if they escaped and broke into our houses later and killed our families?

"You kids hold it right there," said the American soldier coming at us.

I watched closely but none of the prisoners budged off the trucks. They just stared over the rails silently. I studied their faces. The movies, the comic books--the posters at the post office--always made them look like devils or monsters but all these Germans looked just like us.

"What do you kids think you're doing?" asked the American soldier when he reached the side of the road.

"Fighting Nazis," said Harold. "You got something against me fighting the bastards who killed my Daddy?"

"You can't throw rocks at them."

"Why not?"

"Because it's against the law."

"Well ain't that a hell of a thing," said Harold, "they can kill my Daddy, but I can't throw rocks at them."

Cars stalled behind the Army trucks started beeping their horns.



"Hold up," the American soldier yelled at the cars, "official Army business going on here!"

"Young man in the school jacket," a heavily accented voice yelled at Harold in English from the back of one the trucks.

A young German soldier with blonde hair and deep blue eyes called to Harold from the truck directly in front of us. He had a small cut on his forehead. A slight trickle of blood streamed down toward the corner of his eye. I guessed one of our rocks must have hit him.

Harold quit arguing with the American soldier and looked up at the German prisoner. I could see a medal on a silver chain in the German's hand. He pointed to Harold's Catholic school jacket.

"You are Catholic, no?" the German asked Harold.

"Yeah, I'm Catholic. What's it to you, Nazi?" Harold answered.

"I too am Catholic," said the German. He tossed the medal toward Harold. Harold's reflexes forced him to reach out and catch it.

"The medal kept me safe in battle," said the German. "I want you to have it. I wish the medal to keep you safe as well. God bless you."

Harold stared down at the medal in his palm.

We all got real quiet.

The American soldier walked back and climbed in the truck. The gears of the truck groaned and shrieked and the trucks rumbled off.

Harold stared down at the medal in his palm, then he looked up at us. He had tears in his eyes. He turned and walked off.

Nobody said anything. We just watched Harold until he turned the corner.

## WHITNEE THORP

---

### Looking At You Too Long My Eyes Burn

Teach me to be as lovely as you are  
when you stand jeans rolled  
above old tennis shoes  
and grandpa's checkered socks.  
I'd like to know the secret  
of how to get trapped into days  
where all you do  
is plink on piano keys  
or have picnics till the night sky  
closes its dark door on the horizon  
that was once pink like both our lips.  
When you strum strings, shaking your head  
I like to smile at you  
spread out at your feet, my stomach to the concrete  
so cold it feels wet, looking up

at just the moment when the sun is above your  
head and it looks like at any minute  
it will drop sinking below you or me.

And we will forever be on fire.

### **Shirtless and Cool**

three boys stand shirtless  
bare backs facing me  
mosquito bitten and tan  
talking to a pretty girl who  
runs her tongue over her lips when she speaks  
and twirls her hair like a drunken ballerina  
spinning  
all pink and blonde  
she sits on a picnic table  
knees touching  
and listens to the far off band  
screaming lyrics into  
the late august evening  
when even the sky is tired and drained of its  
color  
and the girl seated beside me  
clears her throat  
taps her cigarette, ashes fall  
and a shirtless boy laughs  
the sun is watching with  
its yellow eye

### **I Bite My Lip When There Is Nothing Left To Do**

It is cold in the restaurant and  
your hand is nowhere near mine  
instead you are rearranging the placement  
of your glass and silverware like you always do.  
My napkin's stitching is rough  
like your fingertips used to be  
when we were young and smiled.  
Fellow diners seated with their chairs  
facing out, open their chatter and coos  
about their days of living to our ears.  
You do not hear.  
And we are silent.



COLIN DAUGHERTY

*Devastated*

Oil Paint

*(Inscape Art Award, Second Place)*

The fluorescent lighting reflects  
on the face of my watch  
spinning the illusion that the second hand  
is caught in constant, quick rotation.  
I do not blink and I wonder  
what it is like for every second of time  
to be filled-overrunning with detailed moments  
sandwiched between more detailed moments  
that mattered.  
They have dimmed the lights,  
now my watch just ticks.  
You sigh as you butter your brown bread.  
My hands are cold.

JOEL SPENCER

---

### Nowhere Landscapes

When her labs came back abnormal  
I thought, she'll be OK  
Nothing to worry about  
But she just knew something was wrong  
It was getting dark  
It started to snow

A large heartless ultra-sound machine crowded the office  
She took her pants off and handed them to me  
I folded them into a neat little rectangle of denim  
Like I'd seen her do at home  
She handed me her white panties  
I stuffed them into my coat pocket

Now in a white hospital gown  
With little blue, circular, meaningless designs  
White socks on a tile floor  
Polished to an impressive shine  
Awkward silence kept us company while we waited  
Cotton balls, latex gloves  
Cheap oil paintings  
Of nowhere landscapes  
By no one artists

The doctor explained that the fetus was no longer growing  
Said the labs should record the hormones  
That flood through a woman's body when she is pregnant



Her levels were unchanged  
Should be higher  
Something to worry about

She began to cry, hearts were breaking  
I took her hand, what could I do?  
Nowhere landscapes in a nowhere room

The doctor couldn't find the fetus  
Two days before Christmas and it's emergency surgery  
Our imagined family gone  
Vanished, annihilated  
Just like that

No blue eyes, no blond hair, no first steps  
No diapers, no bottles, no child proof lids  
No *Good Night Moon*, no *Winnie the Pooh*  
Now it's only the two of us  
More alone than we've ever been  
I'm on the couch  
She's in the bed  
Merry Christmas.

## **The Banjo**

Daryl caught me pinchin' a dip of Skoal from his can and flew into one of his tough guy, "I'll teach you" kind of rages. We'd fit before, but somehow this time, it got a little out of hand.

He had walked in the room just as I was puttin' it in and immediately came at me, hands out, red faced and with that crazy look in his eye like he wanted to pinch my head off. Instead, he did what he always did, grabbed me by the front of my shirt and threw his arm around my neck into a headlock. He had that knack of gettin' you just right around the throat and squeezin' just enough to almost pop your eyeballs out of your head. I couldn't stand it, I'd rather he just beat me all day long than get me in that damned old headlock. He never had a shirt on either, even in winter time, and in the summer, the headlock was all the worse. Your face would be pressed dangerously close to the hairiest armpit this side of the Big Sandy. The smell of onions, Old Fitzgerald and unwashed ass would lay you out alone. Long, wet armpit hairs would tickle your ear and the side of your face as you desperately tried to pull the huge forearm away long enough for just a sip of air. The only option you had was to stare, with your eyes bulgin' out, at the one thing in sight, his tattoo. A red mass on his chest, somewhat in the shape of a heart, with barbed wire wrapped around it, befitting its owner. Daryl didn't care about anyone, especially me and Mamma. She brought him home one night about eight months before and he never left since. Mamma worked nights at Marlowe's bar down in town, she must have picked him up there. I know for a fact he wore the same nasty ass blue jeans the whole time because he'd sit around the house in my

dad's old gym shorts when Mamma would wash 'em. Dad died two years before when I was seven, his rig turned over somewhere down along the Pee Dee river in South Carolina. They say he musta fallen asleep at the wheel or somethin', I don't know. All's I know is Mamma was never the same after. Anyway, Daryl had me in a headlock,

"I'll teach you to steal from me you little shit hook!" He loved to say that word, practically wore it out. "This don't seem quite worth it just for one dip, does it boy? Your ma orta be ashamed for raisin' such a theavin' little bastard!"

All I could do was hold onto consciousness and hope my eyeballs stayed in. Then, for some reason, like the hand of god, or maybe just my flailin' and kickin' of the arms and legs, I landed a sturdy shot to the balls. Daryl let go. I fell headfirst into the kitchen cabinets and on the way back from the bounce, caught a backhand from Daryl square cross the left eye and nose. It didn't knock me out, but felt like it shoulda. My whole head rung like shootin' a canon off right beside my face. My ears rung, my face went numb and the blood began to flow from my nose to my mouth.

"I'll kill you, you sorry bastard. Wait till I tell Mamma, she'll throw you and your greasy ass out for sure now," I screamed while bleedin' and boltin' for the door. While Daryl was still doubled over holdin' his stuff, I ran by him and his big hairy fingers retch out and caught the back of my shirt. I spun around and kicked him smack dab on the shinbone and he let go. I hit the door like a coondog out of the box, hopped on my bike and was halfway down the road to Papaw's before I ever looked back to see if he was after me. I reckoned he was too busy suckin' wind and pushin' his guts back into place to be givin' chase. My left eye was beginnin' to swell and I had to turn my head a little to see the entire road. I could tell my nose had stopped bleedin' cos now the blood was beginnin' to cake up in my nostrils and a little whistle was forming somewhere up in there when I breathed in. I didn't slow down though, I was leavin' a dust trail behind me that would've blinded somebody if they was behind tryin' to keep up. I even made my customary jump over the dirt pile in Papaw's side-yard when I hit the bottom of the hill. I think it was probably one of my best jumps. I hit the brake and slid right up agin Papaw's back porch, instantly jumpin' from the bike to the porch and lettin' the exhausted beast lean slowly at first, then crash to its side as it fell away and to the ground. I flew in the house scannin' the usual spots, the kitchen, his chair, the shitter, but Papaw wasn't there. Walkin' back out on the porch, I heard him say, "What's the rush Sonny?" I had run right past him sittin' in the swing and shuckin' corn. He didn't even look up at me, he just kept right on shuckin'.

Papaw was my daddy's dad. Him and Granny raised him right there in that little white house in Blevins Valley. Its no coincidence that my last name is Blevins. Papaw was the first to build here after the war so he got to name it. His front name was Sewell, but everybody called him Sonny like me. I always called him Papaw and when people would yell, "Hey Sonny!" Me and Papaw would both turn and look. He was a short stout man with a grayish copper beard and tufts of silver hair that stuck out from beneath his conductor's hat. He always wore that hat, never took it off, except when he was asleep. I'd see him put it on even before his feet hit the floor. Sometimes I think I'm the only one on earth who knows what Sewell Blevins looks like without that hat on, other'n Granny that is, but she died about three months after Daddy, Papaw said it was from a broken heart because Daddy was the only child she ever had and that when a mother loses her child, a small piece of the mother dies with him. It kind-of made sense to me, I guess the small piece of granny that died was near her heart because that's what killed her, a heart-attack.



I stayed at Papaw's house most of the time, things were weird between Mamma and Papaw after Daddy died, so I just spent the days with Papaw and nights at home. It worked out pretty good cos me and Mamma just lived up the holler a bit.

"Me and Daryl got into it again," I said, "I hate that bastard!"

With that Papaw looked up from the corn and just stared at me. I could see his eyes surveyin' the damage, but he didn't move or change expression. Still holdin' an ear of corn in one hand, he retch up with the other and removed the cigar butt he had been chewing on all day. That's another thing he always did, he always chewed on a previously smoked cigar, but I never saw him light it. I knowed he smoked 'em, I could smell it in the house and the tip was always charred, but I never saw him, not once. He'd just chew the end until it was as flat and round as a silver dollar. You knew he meant business when he took that cigar out of his mouth.

"What do you mean you two got into it? He did that to your face?"

"Yessir," I said, "He caught me stealin' a dip off him and he got me in a headlock but I punched him in the balls and he let me go..."

"I don't give a damn what you did, he ain't gonna beat a child. Especially my grand young'un." He went back to shuckin' the corn and chewin' his cigar. "Go on in the house and wash your face, I got somethin' to show ya, get some ice out of the box and wrap it up in the kitchen towel, hold it to that eye, and hurry up." I ran and did what he said. The ice felt good against the shiner that was startin' to set in. It was gonna to be a good one, I hoped it would last till school started so all the guys would see and maybe some of the girls would say, "Oh Sonny, what happened?" I could make up some story about how I had to beat up this full grown man that wouldn't leave my mamma alone and how I had to kick him out the front door and run him off the land. They'd be all like, "Oh Sonny, your so tough and brave, kiss me!" Yeah, they'll think I'm tuff shit.

Once out in the yard, Papaw led me round the side of the barn to the tack room. There, hangin' from the ceilin' by a length of bailin' twine, was the gourd. It was the most perfect gourd in the world. The neck was long and straight and the bottom was as round as a kick ball. It had completely dried and was ready to become a banjo. Papaw grew it out behind the back porch and had to climb up on the roof of the house to get it when it was ready. Papaw saw it hanging there when it was small, the vines went up the posts on the porch, and up on the roof of the house. He climbed up there right then and tied it off on the side of the roof so it would hang down and grow straight. It certainly was straight, looked like a banjo already to me.

"It's time we got us a skin for the head, by the time it's done drying," Papaw said, "the rest of the Banjo will be ready."

"What'll we use," I asked, "what works best?"

"Any type skin'll work, groundhog, fox, deer, but a cat hide works best," he said.

"Where we gonna get a cat hide?"

"I been thinkin' about that and the only cat I can think of right off is the Widder Johnson's big orange fur ball down the road."

"She ain't got no cat," I said. "That woman hates animals. And truth be known, they hate her too."

"Yeah she does, You just ain't never paid no attention, She's had a big orange-un for goin' on at least four year now."

"How we gonna get him without her knowin'?"





**DUSTI ROSE LEWIS**

*Watching*

Black & White Photograph

*(Inscape Art Award, Third Place)*

"Well it just so happens that she and the women's prayer circle are gone outa town to some Bible thumpin' party this weekend. You think you could sneak down there and get him without being seen by anybody on the road? You might have to take your time and sit on the house till close to dark to get him."

"Yeah Papaw, I'll get him if I gotta sit out there all night."

"I thought you could," he said, "run and make you a couple of turkey sandwiches for dinner and I'll get the 22 and some ammo for you."

Papaw's 22 was a bolt action Winchester that I could tickle a rabbit's nose with from sixty yards away. I'd been shootin' that gun since before I went to school and Papaw trusted me with it anytime I wanted to shoot. I once shot a squirrel slap between the eyes, but he didn't fall from the tree, he just dangled there about eighty feet up and wouldn't let go. That's the way it is though, you get a pretty shot like that and you ain't got no proof to show nobody. You go fishin', catch a monster, and it jumps off the line at the last minute as if to say, "Ha ha, you caught me but you didn't." You can't even tell nobody about it for fear of bein' branded a liar. Duke Wheeler said he caught a eleven pound smallmouth on a piece of corn while carp fishin', but nobody at school believed him, that boy was always tellin' whoppers like that. No, if you didn't have no proof, then you didn't do it.

I knew a way through the woods that would bring me out behind the widow's house, that way I wouldn't even have to get close to the road and nobody would see me. As I walked through the woods with the gun slung over my shoulder and eating a turkey sandwich, I thought about the banjo. I laughed out loud when I thought about what the banjo would look like if we left the orange fur on the hide. If you got tired of playin', you could just sit and pet the orange fur until you got your fingers back. I suppose it wouldn't sound very good though, but it sure would be funny to look at. Nobody at school believed that Papaw could make a banjo out of a gourd but me and Papaw was gonna prove 'em wrong. When it was finished, I'd have about enough time to learn a couple songs before I took it to school and showed em up. The guys would be like, "Cool man, I want one. Can your Papaw make me one?" And the girls would be all like, "Oh Sonny, sing me a song, write a song about me, give me a kiss." Yeah, they'll all see the banjo and want one, but me and Papaw don't have time to make banjos all day every day. Mine would be the only one and they can all just wait till they're blue in the face, for once I'm gonna have somethin' nobody else has got and can't buy with money in a store.

I reached the edge of the woods on a hill behind the widow's house. It was a pretty good spot, the house was a little below me and I could see the entire back yard, the right side and half the front yard from up there. The widow's Caddy was gone, Papaw was right, she wasn't home. I surveyed the yard for anything orange but I didn't see the cat. It had to be there, she wouldn't have taken it with her, but it wouldn't surprise me if she did. Women are always funny about cats, love 'em to death. I don't understand it; cats are stupid. They don't fetch, you can't make 'em hunt nothin', and more than that, I'm allergic to cats. I sat down with my back against a tree and decided to wait. We had to have a cat and, accordin' to Papaw, the widow's was the only one around. There was probably four or five hours of daylight left and I was willin' to wait. I pulled a can of Skoal from my back pocket and took a pinch. I swiped the can after Daryl let me go from the headlock, I figured I might as well have the dip, I took a beatin' for it. My lip must have been busted too 'cause the Skoal burned a little more than usual and I could feel the buzz a lot quicker. I just sat there and watched the house like a hawk, scannin' a grid with my eyes over the yard, looking for orange and spittin ever now and then.



After a while, I threw the dip out and decided to walk down to the creek and get a drink of water. I would be able to see the other side of the house from down there, maybe the cat was on that side. I slid down a steep slope and came to a stop at the bottom where a tree had fallen across the creek. I laid across the log and stuck my face close to the water and got a sip. I got another and swished some dip mixed with blood out from under my lip and spit it back out. The sun had started to dip below the tree line and I knew it would be dark soon. I wasn't worried about finding my way back in the dark, I knew those woods by heart. All I was worried about was finding that cat, which was weird because that's about when I saw a cat. Not the Widow Johnson's orange cat that I had been lookin' for, but one much bigger and way more pissed off. It was a wild cat, creepin' from behind a tree by the creek. We both must have been thirsty at the same time, him more than me though cause he wasn't runnin' off like wildcats always do when they see people. He was starin' me right in the eyes and smilin', showing his long teeth and whiskers. He began to creep forward, hiss'n a little, never takin' his eyes off me while I slowly slipped the rifle from my shoulder and, inch by inch, I raised it up. It's a good thing Daryl blacked my left eye instead of my right cause I close my left eye anyway when I shoot. When I had got the gun up to eye level, the wildcat was startin' to hiss louder and lean forward. I steadied my aim and waited. I felt scared, what if I missed and it got to me before I could reload? Wildcats could kill a person in a second if they wanted to, it's only 'cause their scared of humans that more people aren't attacked. The wildcat stopped and crouched low. I knew he was about to pounce on me, cats always get low before they leap. I stared at him, he stared right back at me. The cat let out a squall and at the same time he jumped, I pulled the trigger and the cat fell limp by the edge of the creek. The shot echoed through the valley and I thought I heard another shot far off, but that's the way gunshots echo, they just bounce around the mountains until the woods swallow 'em up. I couldn't believe it, a wildcat, a real honest to God wildcat. He must have weighed thirty pounds or more. I had to make sure he was dead so I quickly reloaded and walked over, keeping my gun on him just in case. He wasn't movin', not even twitchin'. I lifted his front leg with the barrel of the gun and saw where my bullet had hit him, right square in the chest, right through the heart I bet. What a shot, and this time I had the proof. Nobody could call Sonny Blevins a liar, nobody.

Walkin' back to Papaw's with the wildcat over my shoulder, I thought about how proud Papaw would be. He wanted a cat hide and I got him the best kind there was, a real wildcat hide.

When I got back to the house it was already dark and Papaw was burnin' the trash and brush in the sinkhole he had been fillin' in. The flames were pretty high and they danced light on the ground, the barn and trees nearby. There was a weird smell in the smoke that came from the fire that night, almost reminded me a little bit of Sam Perry's fourth of July pig roast, but somehow different, rotten, but definitely new to my nose. I figured some critter had crawled in there and made a home and didn't make it out in time. Papaw didn't hear me come up beside him. I walked right up and threw the wildcat on the ground in front of him. He looked at the wildcat, turned and looked at me, took the cigar out of his mouth, threw his head back and laughed like I had never heard anyone laugh before in my life. He threw his hands in the air, stomped his feet, slapped his knee and wiped the tears from his eyes.

"That's my boy!" he screamed. "That's my boy, Ha! Ha! You sure got him didn't you? I send you off to get a cat and you bring back a lion. Hell, Yeah! That's my boy!"

It was then that I noticed that Papaw was drinkin'. He had a small jar of shine in his coat pocket, I could see the gold lid reflect in the fire light. Papaw never drank, well, hardly ever. I don't really remember, but Mamma said he stayed drunk for three days when daddy died. The only time I ever saw him drink was when granny died. He started the night she died and didn't stop till after she was in the ground and the dirt was piled on top. I almost asked him who died, but I just plain forgot cause we were both so worked up over the wildcat. Papaw just kept goin' on and on about the wildcat, laughing and slappin' me on the back. He sure was proud of me. He got to cleanin' it right away, slicin the hide from the muscles. He said he would have to remove the hair and let the hide dry out for several months.

I left him there laughin' over the wildcat and went home. It wouldn't be ready in time to learn some songs before school started, but the banjo was gonna be even more awesome than I imagined, a wildcat banjo made from the perfect gourd, what could be better? I'll tell you what could be better, no Daryl, and that's exactly what was waiting for me when I got home. Mamma was sittin' at the kitchen table drinkin' a cup of coffee when I came in. She made a big fuss over my shiner and when I told her who give it to me, she said that he had packed his greasy clothes and run off, "probably with that tramp Debby Sue." I didn't care where he went or who with, all I cared about was that he was gone and I didn't have to worry about head-locks no more. I knowed Mamma was lonely but Daryl was no answer for that. She was better off without him around and so was I. I told her about the wildcat and the gourd, and that me and Papaw was gonna make the coolest banjo out of 'em. She laughed and told me how much I reminded her of Daddy, and was starting to look like him too, except for the shiner. I wished Daddy was still alive, he would have liked to have seen the wildcat and helped with the banjo. He could've picked up the bass, with Papaw on the guitar and me on the banjo, we might have made a pretty good band. Three generations of Blevinses, all in the same band, that would've been somethin' to see.

Me and Papaw worked on the banjo all the way up till school started, then he worked on it alone durin' the day, which was alright cause I pretty much stood around and watched or handed him tools, you know, stuff like that. Most of the time was spent carvin' the fingerboard. Papaw used a piece of dry walnut and shaped it to fit so that it almost looked like the damn thing grew that-a-way, he was good at shapin' and carvin' wood. Walnut was also used for the tunin' pegs, I got to carve two of 'em. The banjo was beginnin' to come to life, it started as a plain old gourd, perfect though it was, and took on the shape of an instrument, barely recognizable, but still a gourd. One day I got off the school bus and bolted to Papaw's. As I raced down the hill, I could hear it, the banjo, it was finished and papaw was already playin' it. Actually, he was just tunin' it up. He had stretched the hide over the sawed-off hole in the head and cut it to fit perfect. Little gold tacks held the skin tight over the hole, and, to be as small as it was, it had a pretty big sound. He was sittin' in the swing on the back porch when I walked up and he broke out with a rendition of "You Are My Sunshine." I couldn't help it, I started to dance and clap my hands and swing around the poles on the porch. When the song was over, he held it out to me and said, "There it is! We did it, don't she sound good?"

"She sure does, I'll bet it's because of the wildcat hide," I said. "A wildcat banjo has a wildcat sound."

"It shor'nuff does," he said with a grin. "It has heart too, lotsa heart. Sounds better'n store bought even."



We played that banjo a lot and I got pretty good at it too. I never took it to school and the girls never wanted to kiss me but we had a pretty good time with that old banjo. Papaw would play the guitar while I played the banjo, and then he'd ask me to tell the story about the wildcat and he would laugh as hard as he did that night I brought it home. We did that all the way through my high school years, and then on weekends and holidays when I came home from my job on the road as a land surveyor. I eventually got a job with an outfit in Courtland, New York, a few years ago. I hadn't been home since Christmas when I got the news from Mamma that Papaw was real sick. I drove a hunnerd mile an hour through five states and got two tickets and one verbal warnin' before I pulled up to the house. Mamma said he wouldn't go to the hospital, I told her he'd never go, he hated hospitals and didn't trust doctors. He once told me that if you're bad enough to need a doctor, it's probably too late. I walked down the black hall to his room at the end. The door was almost shut and the yellow lamplight cast an antique glow around the edge of the doorframe. As I quietly eased the door open I could smell the Vicks. Papaw thought Vicks vapo rub would cure anything. I approached the edge of his bed and touched his arm, he didn't open his eyes. I looked up at his hat on the bedpost and thought about how I hadn't even noticed that he didn't have it on. I looked back at him, he was awake and looking at me.

"Hey boy," he uttered in a raspy voice.

"Hey Papaw. You gonna get up or lay in the bed all day?"

He half coughed and half laughed. "Take it easy old man," I said, "you just lay there and get to feelin' better. I got an itchin' to play the banjo and I'm gonna need you to back me up on the guitar."

"I think my gettin' up days and my guitar playin' days is both over boy."

"Aw, horseshit Papaw, that's crazy talk. You'll be up and outta that bed in no time. Where's my banjo? I'll play you a song and you'll be up dancin' on that bed instead of layin' in it."

He pointed a shaky finger at the trunk in the corner. I walked over and lifted the lid. There it was, the fruits of our labor, the banjo looked as good today as it did fourteen years ago. I picked it up, and when I did, I noticed something in the trunk that I hadn't seen in a very long time. Under the banjo, laid out flat like a trophy rug, was the wildcat hide, in its entirety. No part was missin', the head was still there, the legs, paws, tail, fur, everything. How could that be, he used the hide for the banjo head, didn't he? I touched the fur just to see if it was real. My brain told me that it shouldn't exist, that it had been used for the banjo. I stood up with the banjo in one hand and the hide in the other. I turned to look at Papaw and was met with a grin, a grin that screamed the truth at me, a truth that I was holding and had held for years without even knowin'. I took one good look at the banjo and there it was, some pins had come loose and the hide was peelin' up on one side of the hole. I held it up to the yellow light and saw what was underneath on the other side of the hide. I felt my throat bein' squeezed, my eyeballs about to pop out, I couldn't breathe. There, on the underside of the skin was a red mass, somewhat in the shape of a heart, with barbed wire wrapped around it, befittin' its owner. Once again he had me around the throat, my heart began to pound, I couldn't break free from the grip of emotion, the memory, Daryl. Papaw, his dark eyes like glass beads, just stared at me, still grinnin'. It was too much, I couldn't believe what my mind was tellin' me. I put the banjo and the hide back in the trunk and left the room without lookin' at Papaw. I made my way to the back porch and sat in the swing. I could see Mamma washin' dishes at the kitchen sink through the open

back door. She didn't know, she could never know, nobody could ever know. Papaw had kept it secret and now I had to keep it a secret. I could see the spot in the side-yard where the sinkhole was and the thought of what was in it gave me a chill that ran up my back and clear across my scalp makin' my hair feel like it was standin' on end. He didn't have to kill him. I hated Daryl, but he didn't have to kill him. I had to go back to Papaw's room, I had to ask him if it was true, even though I knew it was. When I walked up to his bed, he was turned away from me.

"Papaw?" I touched his arm. "Papaw?" I shook him a little, he didn't turn over. I left the room and went to the kitchen where Mamma was still doin' dishes.

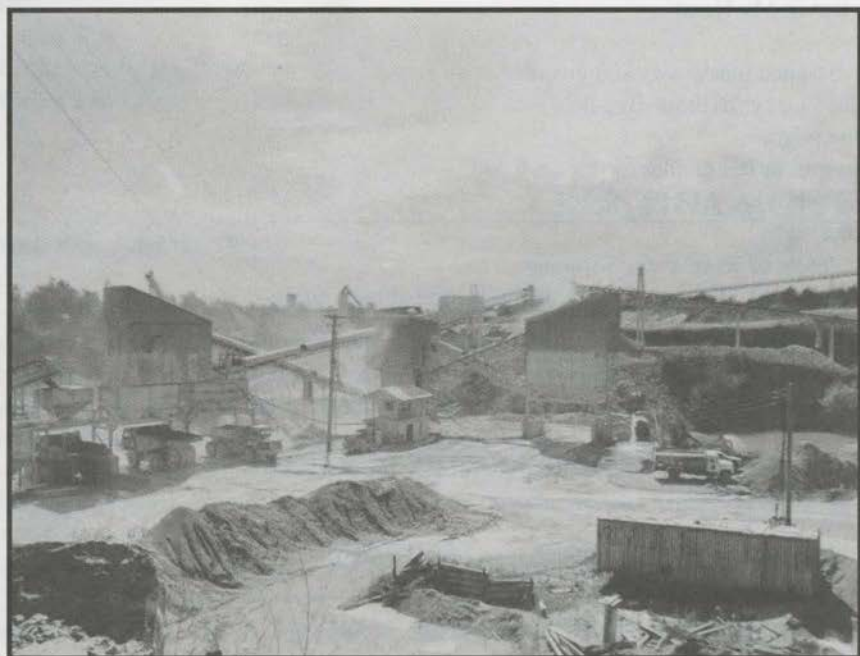
"How's he doing," Mamma asked, "does he need anything?" I didn't answer. I just walked to the fridge, opened the door and took out the jar of shine that was half empty and ice cold. I went back to the swing on the porch, unscrewed the lid and took a drink.

SARA PERKINS

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### Order of the Autumn Battle

I made the pilgrimage with pagan's eyes  
Four days before the Harvest Moon.  
Bore the scourges and lances of the gauntlet-path  
In bloody homage to forest sprites.  
Perched on a point in the arms of a martyr,  
I took vigil and waited for the answer tides to come.  
Drunk on sacred fumes  
Of fermenting past,  
I heard the Priests' whispers:  
Rumors of defrogment  
Passed down by sky of primal ochre hue.  
An oath swore by all, united  
To don the warrior dress  
Cast off the demure greens  
In defiance and in favor  
Of the scarlet-yellow,  
Tunics of the Golden War to come.  
Amid the battle cry of locust drums  
I stole east to tamer lands  
As the blood spilled at my back.



**CASEY MCCOWN**

*Bourbon Limestone*

Black & White Photograph

*(Inscape Art Award, Honorable Mention)*



**A Harlem in My Heart***(Inspired student poetry prize winner)*

I want to write like Langston Hughes  
All Jazzed up and Funked up  
Musical rhythms on a page  
A Harlem in My Heart

A Renaissance that grows and grows  
'till those jazzy rhythms over flow  
onto the page  
and Josephine Baker dances from my pen  
Her hips swaying back and forth  
back and forth  
White Pearls of Revelation dripping  
from her mocha breast as I keep the drum beat of inspiration

Langston, Langston, don't you see?  
Your River is my river  
So deep and powerful  
It thunders to a sadness in my heart I didn't know was there  
Rushing and Churning  
'till I am over flown  
And I see with your eyes the hidden men of my country

Countee will I ever write like you  
Fair skin child that I am  
Some say soul takes a burden to carry  
And my burden isn't enough to pen your Marvels

But our good and well meaning God did not quibble  
When He gave me the desire to take up this pen  
and blindly muddle my way through line and verse

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WAYNE STEVENS**Ideas**

Some ideas are like wagon wheels  
Rolling down a hill  
Some are good and some are great  
Some are like big fat rocks  
Skipped upon a lake.

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falling into life

falling into the fresh cut grass  
 no way to lose yourself in time  
 dark water that covers the sky, to you I look  
 no where to go but left  
 only left  
 don't touch this  
 feel the seasons on your face  
 fall into life and let go

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KRISTINA MONTESI

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The Man Who Sold the World

I rounded up the collection of miscellaneous crap I'd been given recently and that in their absence, made my walls and closet look clean. The items appeared sad piled together and out of their normal place setting. Maybe I had rubbed off on them too much. I wanted to hug them and sleep beside them. Instead, I put the offering in the hallway with a note I felt obliged to send them off with. The note went as follows:

*Please take these things. They all work and they are free. However, you have to live with the fact that they've come from a lying, cheating asshole who abuses women to make himself feel more like a man. Thank you.*

I made sure to underline free and by the hour's passing, nothing was left of the pile but a book and an unused whoopee cushion. I *couldn't* believe that no one wanted the whoopee cushion! The pile of crap could decorate some other wall in a room I would never see.

This was expected. Someone taking something from what they knew to be an utter disgrace to humanity without any guilt whatsoever. I wanted to see if it mattered whether or not the items belonged to a bad person. People are likely to take a Bible from Satan if he had an Abercrombie sweatshirt on. Whoever took the unwanted belongings perhaps read the note and laughed and later threw it away as soon as they discovered how to detach it from the strong adhesive I used. You tell someone something and they have either to believe it or politely brush it off. Maybe they believed that what I said in the note was True and will now keep a keen eye out or perhaps they politely brushed me off and will most likely be found rounding up her own pile of crap soon enough. I assume that there are only two categories of people left in this world – the trustworthy and the *untrustworthy*. Other than that, nothing really matters. It is the ultimate question and we all want to do it, but trust doesn't come around that often. It's like pulling teeth trying to get someone to listen and believe you! For the longest time I could not understand why honesty was so hard to grasp and why it was so hard for people to trust, until I realized how many out there are lying to each other. If trust is something that we all want to do, we better start telling the Truth. Never have I ever seen such a blatant disregard for the Truth as I have lately.



Well this Truth that I talk of must not be good. It must not sit well in the mouths of those that never speak it. It must not be too easy to do or else more would certainly be doing it. Maybe it's just not the cool thing to do anymore. Maybe telling the Truth means letting people get to know a little more of you than they should. Maybe speaking the Truth means that there is no longer a place to be hidden. You might have to be judged. You might be left by someone you really care about if the Truth gets out! Let's all run from the Truth – the very thing that I believe God still considers holy!

The last lies in my life belonged in that pile of crap I last saw near the elevator doors. It hurt my stomach to finally hear the Truth from people I hardly trusted in the first place only because I had spent so much of my time hearing lies. I know some of the things that happened. I am still unable to fully grasp the entire Truth for lack of people wanting to even discuss such a person.

But how could anyone ever fully know a liar?

I know about your Amy's, your Molly's, your Claire's. I know about the cheating on me and with the others. I know about the wanted abortions and the many loves of your life. I know that I was just a cunt that you found little interest in. I wonder how many it's been. How many times I came close to getting AIDS but was saved by your inability to get hard. You were quite susceptible to meanness and in that sense, I was never allowed to be. If I was mean, you might cry or better yet, you might leave while I'm using the restroom to knock on a door elsewhere hoping to find a Hot Pocket and a Xanax to relieve your hunger. I know about the fights and the sex and the drugs that propelled your meaningless existence. When I hear something new about you I cannot help but cringe to think that I ever let anyone like you touch me. The people speaking to me about you are usually friends of yours in some way and even they seem to hold you in low esteem. I am the last one to know once again and I almost feel bad about the whole thing.

Looking around this indigenous map I've grown so accustomed to, I have not found many that strike my likeness. You would have to be completely desperate to even go near half of the locals and if you've already fucked the other half, where are you going to look? As I sat pondering this morbid question, I realized that maybe I had been spared from this relationship for a reason. Not only did I have to fork over enough money to take care of his broke ass on a daily basis, I also had to leave behind lifelong friendships that resulted much more meaningful than what he ever offered. At the time, they seemed like reasonable requests, but that is only because Truth had taken a small vacation.

Things were asked of me all the time. It was as if the world owed him something, and I was the world. Adjusting to this new behavior I acted accordingly and did every thing that was asked of me. All I ever wanted in return was, can anyone guess? A little clue as to what this entire essay is about? The Truth! The Truth can stand hand in hand with everything that I will ever do again. The Truth will remain the only acceptable way in which to communicate with people. A little more Truth would go to say that you liked your laundry done for you. You liked to be taken care of fully while you sat and whined about the next thing that you wanted that I did not yet purchase. You liked lunches and dinners and movie tickets and cases of beer to be paid for. I cannot imagine the type of woman that would do such extravagant things for someone that they had only just met! Normally, a woman would laugh. She would be more likely to slap you and walk away from your outstretched arms and big teeth, than to perform the duties that you've asked of her. If the woman does not respond well with the requests, she will be given the History of

events past. When this occurs, a subtle charm takes over to tell a heart breaking misfortune told from a person with a blatant disregard for the Truth. As a woman, sympathy and compassion for others is encouraged from a very early age, and so, as he continues his life history, an overwhelming amount of care begins to take place. This is only a human reaction as the Truth gets butchered from the bibles that Satan began throwing. The lies and exaggerations are masked by the pain of a child, something of which is very hard to overlook. Any woman, no matter how cold and frigid she may appear, cannot resist a man with tears in his eyes, whether they are forced or otherwise. And as history would have it, another woman turns into the chump that she is and gets played like a Stradivarius until Truth meets her once again.

Coming back from vacation, Truth wanted me to pick him up at the airport. I yelled and yelled and could not find any good reason to forgive him.

"I was counting on you!" I shouted over the receiver.

"I know," he said. "But I just needed some time to myself."

I picked the Truth up from the airport and we had a very long silence on the way home. I apologized promptly the next morning, for I knew that it was not his fault.

The only Truth I know from you happened while you slept. Eyes closed and body lifeless, I could take my time watching you. I knew that you could not pull away or say anything mean. I could love you so easily like this. You were at peace while I stared. Asleep, you were in no harm's way. I wrapped my arms around you and protected you from everything – including yourself. It took me a long time to realize that that was the only way I could ever love you – when you had no idea that I was doing so.

The last time I really looked at you I thought that you would be begging me to forgive you. That you at least loved me that much to not leave without an apology for all the incredible pain that you caused. There was no apology. No remorse or sorrow for anything that you've done. If you truly believe your innocence, then I recommend psychiatric help. And if you are fully aware of your lies and the grief you caused me and *still* feel your innocence, then I recommend staying out of the dating scene for awhile – at least until you comprehend what it truly means to be human.

Consciousness on the other hand, was never one of your greatest times of the day. Always looking for someone new to fill your ulcers with temporary happiness. If not a person, then a book. No books? Then it was on to the drugs. Have you any idea how devastating it is to know that your greatest love looks for meaning in everything but you? Do you know what it's like to try so hard to make someone happy – sacrificing your own happiness – just to find out that they weren't understanding even a second of it? When she told me that you went to her when things between us weren't enough, I finally understood what a crippling of life could really be like. I wanted to punch you so hard when you remained persistent with your lies. It was obvious that the Truth hadn't even been *mentioned*. Why didn't you just give in? What kept you *still* from telling me the Truth? The evidence was overwhelming. I could have had everything on a DVD. If I played the DVD for you would you have finally told the Truth then? From what I gather, feeling love for another is acceptable but only if you keep them at arm's length. No one should have your heart by its testicles. No human is capable of that kind of trust. Out of stupidity of course, we give it and expect something decent in return. It's a nice thought. Sort of like coupons! But when you get to the cashier, you suddenly remember to check the expiration dates – and by the time the groceries are brown bagged, you've only saved 75 cents!



No one knows the importance of loyalty anymore. It gets thrown around like a dog playing Frisbee with its owner. Covered in saliva, you have to fight it out of its mouth.

Well I am tired of serving and then dropping the tray.

If people knew what loving another truly meant, they would probably push it aside. People want nothing to do with hard work. It takes too much time, patience, and understanding. It's too much to do in one lifetime. But you would think that someone would have gotten it right by now. I cannot even remember the last time you pulled me aside from your busy day and looked at me while you reminded me how much I was loved. I cannot even recall the last time you did something outside of the box with me or listened earnestly to what I had written. And you knew I tried to impress you and you couldn't even watch. I craved your attention much too greatly for you not to give it to me. And while I was alone in the dwellings you were making some whore come under your dirty sheets.

I never lied. Not even once. Not even when I knew it would be easier to. Not even when I felt scared that you would leave. But I presume that takes balls – two things of which you've never had. I have been here the entire time. Even when you thought people were looking at us with jealousy, when I clearly saw them shaking their heads. Contrary to what you thought, no one wanted to be in my place. The women that seem to be chosen by you are weak and often emotionally unstable. I ponder this theory of mine while driving back home. I brought this to your attention before when I told you that you treat women like shit and without a pause, you retorted that women deserve it. I also found this odd about you. It seems to be my understanding that every woman you have come across has done everything entirely for you and has tried to help you in any way they could. I may be wrong here, but I thought the *men* in your life were the only ones to inflict any harm. I also realize that with a weak woman, you can treat her horrible in every way possible and expect her to stay. Who else does she have, right? A person that treats their loved ones like horse shit deserves to be shot three times in the leg and then left in the middle of the woods to be eaten by raccoons. But the women in your life – the ones that have had your constant best interest in mind don't count. You could more or less leave them near the elevator in giant heaps for somebody else to sift through and take.

I imagine how things used to be and how I felt captivated each morning waking up to your body and your purring. I liked to smell your face in the morning because you always smelled so good after a long sleep. I never imagined that you were doing the same things with others. You were my baby that I felt so good to be around. How could you do this to me? How was this even an option for you?

I waited for you in the hospital waiting room. I watched *Hocus Pocus* on the TV with some eight year old girl that kept waving at me. I liked her. She was nice. I had no idea that you were addicted to them. People become addicted to comic books and TV series. People become addicted to donuts and to cigarettes even. They do not become addicted to pills. You didn't even thank me for waiting as I did so that you could take your drugs and then be mean to me. I wished I could have gone home with that little girl and her mother. Maybe we could have had tea and a movie.

Now this essay isn't about who you may think. This essay is the Truth about someone who does not exist. It is a mockery of whatever Love is supposed to mean. This is a barrel of words that I threw up and assembled to create whatever this is to be when it's done. This essay means nothing to me because nothing does anymore. But it also means the world to me. The writing I've done has stood up for me against the harshest of abuse when no

one else was even awake to. The Writing creeps up behind me and scares me when I am watching the Sci-Fi Channel. The Writing keeps in the warmth of the shower when I'm being dried off with towels. The Writing tells me what time it is when I am late for business meetings. The Writing shares lunches and dinners with me and never interrupts a story to tell his own. The Writing, if he let's me, will remain my most important appendage. The Writing has become my world, another limb, to help me reach things. Because of this, I am still able to find the gist of whatever to expect from this life.

The man who sold the world is an incredibly selfish and undeserving man. A man who has the entire world at his fingertips just to dispose of it makes him a willing martyr. He is now that much more vulnerable to unhappiness. A great writer, a musician, a once caring and sensitive man, loved by a great deal of people before lying and cheating them, is now resolved to nothing but a cube. So many great ambitions, so few a things to take them away. I'll never understand why he sold the world. What was it that was so important that the entire world had to be given up?

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## LAURA EKLUND

### Love In Its Lost Movement

*for George*

For the ridge that breaks the wind, I love you.  
For the deer with their hungry eyes  
Beating like an opera, I love you.  
For your kisses like the morning fog, I love you.  
For the expressions of pampas grass, I love you.  
For my identity of nature, I love you,  
And into its lost movement.

For the cloud in its pure glow, I love you,  
Its picture in my head,  
Describing the time of year,  
I will not endure physically, I love you.  
For the way the seas drain the sky, I love you.  
For the very early spring  
In the earth's darkest contrasts of light, I love you.

For the rhythm in a tree's arms, I love you.  
For your whispers across my breast, I love you.  
In the fang of near living, I love you.  
For the soft, subtle light on the woodshed window, I love you.  
For the painting you can look at in every way, I love you.  
And, inside your eyes that drown water, I love you.

For the beating breath in a hand, I love you.  
For any opaque color, I love you,  
In the face of a strange abstract thought.

For the truths that Albrecht told, I love you.  
For the presence of a warm kitchen, I love you.

For the pines that leave my memory, I love you.  
And, for all the white color,  
Making love in the afternoon,  
Like a poem I love you.

### **Dream me to the World**

*After a poem by Robert Lowell*

Anywhere from under the earth I have come  
and bringing centimeter to my arm  
I have found you grinning at your nakedness  
burnt into the ground of my living  
giving me to the nose that grows across your face  
running the river to your whiskers of the breath  
I call face in flute to you.

Fearing the crocuses eat their way through life  
to the wild cherries in orbit of the mandamus in your mind  
you are the mantrition  
to my heads in the unusual places you suffer  
where you plant me in your growth  
I open to their body that cannot lie.  
You come to the book in word  
like the poet of your pain, I am you  
the clover of my seagull  
and to the many layers of the moon  
O, how they dance against the whiteness of your hands  
in a small opening through the person that I am  
used in deciding something by chance  
passing along the alimentary of your mud.

For the firmness of your iris  
tiny hands cup your thick leaf  
crying softly into the diet of your shadow  
for how you dreamed me to the world  
more than a mortal could.

**RANA WILLIAMS**

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### **Old Man**

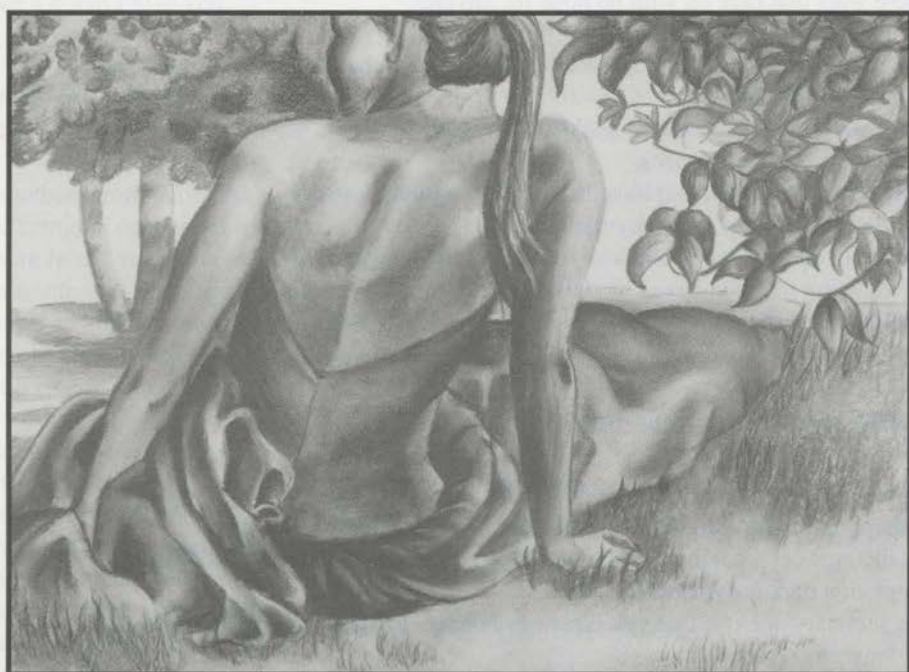
Poor old man, the strife of his indifferences mar the beauty of his happiness,  
Reflecting upon the decisions that he made, and the decisions that have made a  
world a place of change,



A change that was not for the better, as he sent those who knew nothing,  
he tricked them into death,  
Boys, all of them, lost to an unattainable enemy,  
Why old Man?  
Now the world is saturated with wars that you began,  
but never finished,  
These wars that rage on with no hope for anyone,  
not even Allah.  
You have buried us all, and it has taken too long for the dirt to cover our faces,  
Hatred, Oh this hatred!  
This hatred you have created works its way into our flesh,  
like worms on dead corpses,  
They have eaten us as you have lied, and brought us wars,  
Our deaths are for you to bury old man,  
Old man you think you have lost your happiness,  
not knowing that you have killed us all!  
Old man, don't you know this,  
don't you know...

#### **"Where are you, Mr. Robertson?"**

Nights mirrored in loathy sweaty heats of undue passions,  
Making an adulter out of one clean shaven, well mannered nice guy,  
Balancing work, making do with duties of good husband, when all the while  
temptation darkens your every step,  
The secretary, the one that you do not even have, has been yesterday's news for  
the longest stretch,  
While the new item faintly enters your mind because the newest girl, Drive-thru  
Debbie, has taken the saliva right out of your mouth,  
But nothing is just savory enough for you Mr. Robertson, after your meal of  
peach pie *à la carte*, somehow you find room for more dessert,  
Sally, sexier than basted chicken cutlets, and moister than your wife's freshly  
baked pineapple upside down cake, is ripe for your picking,  
There she is, there for the taking, though she is half your age, and somewhat  
younger,  
With nothing there to stop you, Mr. Robertson, you take what could have been  
your only daughter, or some would say,  
Then quickly as she came, she is tossed away like crumbled garbage,  
Nothing but dirty filthy thoughts, as you watch someone you do not even know  
walk past you,  
Oh, you nasty devil you, rubbing out the memories of a marriage that no longer  
exists,  
Sitting there silently,  
waiting for the next kill.



BRITNEY HURON

*Holly*

Charcoal

**Big Blue Heaven**

They lined the stadium, like the corn fields at grandpa's house, row after row after row, the same green color and pattern filling up to the sky – my brother thought the stairs would take us all the way up to heaven, if we kept on climbing. Dad made us go to every practice, to watch him, he said, but I knew it was really because he had nowhere else to throw us. We always sat in the same seats, C5 and C6, right by the gate, right by Sean and Silas – they would sweat and you could smell where they didn't wear any cologne. But they always brought us, my brother and I, a handful of purple grapes – so sweet I thought they were blueberries.

My brother was afraid of the men. The pits of his eyes were permanently glued to them, always waiting for them to move in some stirring way, to yank out a shotgun or a dagger. But no, only those sweet grapes. When they laid out in their dark hand, the dark purple dull against their skin, his baby-face would squint and smudge up all together, like he was wondering if they were real or not, or were they poison? At school the older boys made fun of my brother; they'd told him that those men he always hung around had murdered their own family and were hiding out from the cops in the stadium. They saw us one day, from behind the fence that stretched along at the rear of the seats. Their daddies would kill 'em, the boys said, if they caught them with those dark men. Mt brother never minded them much, not 'till the other kids in the school started to whisper creeping things, like that he had killed our mom.

We raced up a row of empty bleachers, I won, but both our hearts were tearing into us for more oxygen. Finally, plopped down in our usual seats, my brother's gaze secretly landed in their direction. They seemed like they had never noticed.

I don't know what happened to him that day, I always thought that just maybe he clasped some boost or force that simply pushed him over the edge of his summer-long wonderment, but as soon as those men handed over the blueberry grapes, he exploded into a blurred, monotonous ramble of words.

They stared for a short while, laughed a little, and one shook his head, "What'd you say, boy?"

He cleared his throat, trying to deepen his soft voice, and raised his chin and nose, "Do you live here?"

The other turned his head and continued to watch the practice, uninterested in the ramble. A ball had just been hit out of the field and all the men were congratulating, yells drifted up the lateral line to their first-class seats, and he was enthralled.

The first popped another grape into his mouth and swished it around for a little with his tongue. He spit the seeds onto the dirt scattered concrete. "Yea, we do."

My brother shrugged his shoulders, but his eyes were still as big and round as before. He almost lost containment of his fervor. "So, you know?"

The man's forehead wrinkled a little more, "Know what boy?"

"Those stairs..." he raised his big eyes up to the top. "Do they go all the way up?" The words faded into a whisper and he pointed his finger up in divine amazement.

He popped another in his mouth and leaned all the way back in his chair, gazing into the blue. A smile smeared across his face, and he lowered his eyes back down to my brother. "All the way to heaven. Didn't ya' know? That's why your daddy always takes you with him, ev'ry practice."



My brother looked back down at the man, his eyes innocent and hopeful, "Is she there?"

Another homerun was hit down on the field, and the man beside the speaker stood up to see the players scramble; I was intent on the conversation. My mom's voice seemed to glisten in with the man's, "Yea, boy, she is." And like that, like how simple my Daddy can hit a baseball with his bat, how grapes can become blueberries, or how a boy can fall out of place, the dark man put him right back. And we were okay.

## The Blue Herring

We sit beneath the gazebo,  
that my papaw built 18 years ago –  
the day after I was born.  
It is rotting at the edges  
- at its foundation  
but it is still ours,  
and we listen to the crickets by moonlight.

Earlier Mama came running in to me,  
pulled me away from the TV set  
with her thick, full arms  
into the outside where she had spotted  
a blue herring  
resting in one of the tall oaks  
that stood like guards around the gazebo.

At first, I couldn't see,  
so she took my head and planted it firmly in its direction.

How she must have suffered  
to see me blinded.

"I can't see it, Mama," I cried pathetically  
"Look baby," she grunted back, "Look in the trees, through the leaves.

It's there baby, I promise."

Finally, she let go  
of my head,  
released.

And I could feel the sweet, warm breeze against my cheeks,  
where her sweating fingers were lined against  
and I could see it move the leaves,  
then in my body  
like anxiety and excitement both  
and against the breeze  
like the gulp of an imagined blue moon barely resting in the sky,  
it perched lightly before us both,  
its gigantic wings curled around its body,  
chest curved out with extravagant confidence  
with sincere purpose.

"I see it, Mama," I whispered.  
Tangled in its beauty, we were stuck there,  
gazing at what we could not understand  
but together.

I turned to see my mother's now wet face  
and grasped her bare, ring less hand.  
The blue herring left us then;  
I think it was waiting for us.  
Mama is cutting the tree down tomorrow,  
where she spotted the blue herring,  
for new wood  
to fix the gazebo.

### **Meme's Bottle**

Like sweet cologne and the taste of raspberries,  
like Meme, Mom said, it smells ripe.  
The bottle's mine now, to keep  
and play with. But I don't.  
It sits on the top  
of the white shelves that line the back wall of my room.  
Mom brought it in,  
Put it on my dresser, but I couldn't stand it there.  
She had tears on her puffed cheeks; the bottle's  
still halfway full – just the way it was,  
when Meme left.  
Mom is too afraid that she'll waste it away.  
That's why she has given it to me,  
so she'll stop crying.  
I've noticed, it's very pretty,  
and reflects light,  
untouched and un-smudged.  
Its middle curves out all around,  
slims at the top and bottom,  
and the lid is pointed glass that makes a popping noise  
because it fits so tightly,  
like it laughs at you.  
But I don't touch the bottle.  
It's getting dusty.  
Sometimes it scares me to see it there.  
Sometimes I'm afraid Meme can still see me;  
I can't move then.  
But when the wind is hard,  
I put her on my pillow  
so she will not fall.



## BRITTANY APPLGATE

*Tattoo Girl*

Prisma Marker & Ballpoint Pen



## My Paper Doll Husband

Freshly showered  
wearing only your "wife beater" undershirt,  
boxer shorts and navy socks,  
you stand at your closet.

My paper doll husband

Watching from our bed,  
I pretend to sleep  
when you look my way.

My paper doll husband

Through squinted eyes, I watch  
as you select your clothes.  
Gray J. Peterman shirt, charcoal wool pants.  
Rubber-soled loafers pulled from the top shelf.

My paper doll husband  
Dark-haired, broad-shouldered,  
flat-bellied, narrow-hipped,  
you are just as I saw you forty years ago.

My paper doll husband

Crisp pages catch the summer breeze.  
Karen and I lie under the elm tree,  
the Fall Sears & Roebuck catalog,  
just pulled from the mailbox, between us.

"You can't pick him. He's already my husband."

"He can't be. We just turned to this page."

"But I picked him out on page 135.  
He is just wearing different clothes here."

There you were –  
My paper doll husband

And our children, Lucy and Bobby, on page 241.  
A lifetime spread out in four-color images –  
sofas, chairs, lamps, beds and tables –  
Everything we needed within 500 pages.

Decades ago, yet I found you just yesterday.

My paper doll husband

### **Pink Magnolia Café on Front Street**

White linens flutter in the breeze  
Grey-blue clouds rise from nearby textile mills  
Mint-flavored tea graces Haviland china  
Silver slivers jump above brackish water  
White-gloved hands pass watercress sandwiches  
Freighters glide past

**FRANKIE FINLEY**

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### **The Death of the Whale**

When my daughter Aedin was three, she would look up at complete strangers and say, “The whale died.” She uttered this simple declarative sentence almost daily for over a year, without any hint of sadness or need for reply. Most people would snap their heads to look at me with worried eyes, to make sure they’d heard her correctly. I’d shrug and say, “We saw a beached whale in Virginia.” They would nod, smile weakly, and hurry away, often looking back over their shoulders at us as if they were anxious to keep their distance. During that year, I wondered constantly how such a simple statement as “The whale died” could invoke such discomfort in someone who hadn’t experienced it.

In June, my partner and I had planned a long weekend camping trip to Chesapeake Bay, Virginia. Our camp site was an ordinary one for a state park—a flat spot for the tent, a parking spot for the car, a picnic table, a small ring for the campfire, and a small line of trees to act as a barrier on three sides, giving the appearance of privacy. The site backed up to the woods, where there was a small walking path that connected us to another group of tent sites. Aedin and I spent a lot of time playing along that path, mostly because she was fascinated with snails—their eyes were on stalks and their house was on their back. A short walk from our tent led to the boardwalk that ran over the sand dunes to the beach.

The first two days, we had the makings of an ideal family summer vacation—full of sun, sand, surf, snails, and siestas during the day and idle chatter around the campfire after dark. We made it a point to take a walk at sunset, though the water was on the wrong side of us to have a brilliant display of colors. Surrounding all sides of the boardwalk were patches of tall grasses and occasional shrubs. As we walked, these plants closed in on us, making the beach seem much wilder than it was. All around a lovely sweet-smelling shrub, one hundred dragonflies—at least—hovered. The sinking light of the sun behind us lit up



## DUSTI ROSE LEWIS

*(Is the Sun Shining?)*

Black & White Photograph



their green foil bodies, which glimmered against the velvet blue of the Bay whispering behind them. Their wings seemed invisible except at the split second when they changed direction, or on the rare occasion that one would light on a branch or blade of grass. Their collective humming made me hold my breath. Aedin was amazed. "It's a dragonfly city," she whispered.

On the third day, we went to the beach after our late morning siesta. Aedin was content sitting just out of reach of the surf with my partner, absorbed in constructing ditches and hills in the sand, inching backward as the tide rose. I was swimming offshore when I noticed what looked like a Coast Guard helicopter making low rounds overhead. I swam back to the shore, worrying that a shark had gotten through the nets, and squinted up at the sky. Soon, a second helicopter, one with a local news station logo on the side, joined in the circling. I turned to say something to my partner and noticed people running down the beach. Toward what? And then I saw it off in the distance to my right—a large, black something writhing, pushing, moving out of the water. A whale!

I picked up Aedin and started hurrying down the beach, but every step felt like it was in slow motion. At first, the whale was moving, and people were trying to help. I watched its movements slow, and then stop before I reached it. Tears ran down both my cheeks, and Aedin touched one with her hand.

The closer we got, the clearer I could see the wounds on the whale, bright pink gashes in an otherwise smooth inky surface. It was a humpback whale the size of a school bus, tiny for a whale—a baby. I looked into the one eye I could see, hoping to see signs of life. There were none. One of the Coast Guard officials said, as he set up a perimeter, that she had likely been hit by the propeller of a large ship, and had beached herself to end her misery. I asked how old she was, and he replied, "About two or three. Her mother is still likely nearby, so that's why we have helicopters flying over, so that no other whales get hurt today."

I wanted to throw myself on top of her, the first whale I'd ever seen in my life, and cry for her suffering, and then cry even more for the suffering her mother would endure for the rest of her life. I'd read about entire pods of whales beaching themselves, and always imagined it was the result of grief. My grief for the whale mixed with my grief for my mother, and then for my grandmother, who had tried to explain the grief of losing a child by setting her own headstone next to my mother's in wait. As my body shook with sobs, so did Aedin's. I hugged her hard, and realized that her tears were shed out of sympathy for me only when she pointed at the whale and asked, "What is that?"

"It's a whale," I told her. "They're large animals that live in the ocean."

"Why isn't it in the water?" she asked.

"It got hurt by a boat and died," I told her. I think most parents might not have been so honest or direct about this point, but already in Aedin's short life, she'd been to three funerals, and had seen my daily battle with grief. The first was for my cousin who'd died in a car accident on his way out for cigarettes on the morning of his eighteenth birthday; Aedin focused all her love on his father, who'd taken to bed sick with grief, and made him smile at her that day. The second was for my papaw, who had been beaten and mugged outside a poker game; he died of a heart attack in his friend's driveway, his nitroglycerin just steps away in his truck. The final was for my mother, who'd lost a short, yet brutal, battle with pancreatic cancer the year before.

"They shouldn't have done that," she said, looking very serious.

"I know," I said, and picked her up, heading back to camp

~ ~ ~

A few months after the vacation, my partner and I separated. Aedin struggled to understand her new reality—day care, two homes, and weekend visits. Every weekend when she came to my new apartment, I held her in my lap, rocking her as she pleaded, over and over, "When are you coming back? I want you to come home."

"This is my home now," I said, holding her tight, trying not to match her sobs. A true believer in the ability of art to heal any pain, I kissed her forehead and sent her off to her miniature table and chairs. I told her, "Draw what makes you sad. It *will* make you feel better."

She rubbed her little fists into her eyes, and then bent over the paper earnestly. After a while, she showed me a drawing she had labored over—a perfect ink outline of the shape of the whale on the beach, the water line crossing the tail at just the right place. I looked at the drawing, then back at her. "The whale died," she said, then walked over to her table to draw some more.

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## JESSICA STUMP

### Paint My Picasso

Sad stroke,  
smooth glide,  
paint brush tipped in blue.

A note is held,  
as my breath stops;  
a sigh is all that matters.

The same thing,  
tear stains,  
a page begins to ripple.

*What* simple words.

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## JAMES B. GOODE

### My Quietness

The tendril trees  
Black spires  
Lean on  
Passing buttermilk clouds  
I touch the texture  
With my fingers  
Drinking like a thirsty hunter  
My face buried  
In the cool spring water  
Feeling the sting

On my jaws  
I feel the pleasure  
Running into me  
Like so many silent rivers  
He has made  
This quietness is mine  
He has given it  
A gift  
Like so many others  
That fills us all.



## GLORIA STEPP

### *Miss You*

Black & White Photograph



## *The Dog Ate My Paper*

*"Your brain has two parts. The left has nothing left and the right has nothing right"*

*--Translation of Chinese Idiom*

It's Friday  
and we're stitching the paper together  
but no one has a disk  
or it's in some far flung format  
indecipherable  
to anyone but aliens  
it's the new  
the-dog-ate-my-paper  
except this dog has  
hundreds of heads  
and thousands of sharp teeth  
files have disappeared  
they've been corrupted  
raging venereal viruses  
for which there is no known cure  
have launched unprovoked attacks  
there's no safe intercourse anywhere  
I e-mailed it to myself  
but I don't know where it went  
It was there last night  
but while I was sleeping  
something got in my backpack  
and slimed the files  
I saved it  
on the school computer hard drive  
but the geeks removed  
all unnecessary files  
over the weekend  
they shrug their shoulders  
when I ask what they thought we were going to do today  
One makes a knitting gesture with his hands  
"They're going to eat you alive  
When you transfer,"  
I say in disgust.  
They stare straight ahead  
their faces a zombie, ashen gray  
lit by the purple, tinted glow  
Of their monitors  
"Have a great Thanksgiving,"

I say  
Sarcastically  
and promptly leave the room.  
"You too," I hear a timid voice say  
as I retreat to my office and close the door.

### Has Elvis Left The Building?

"The passage of time is the enemy of all investigations."

Now  
after over an hour in the examining room  
I can hear the low din of Elvis the gastroenterologist  
arguing with his nurse  
over the misplacement of a blood order  
she denies ever seeing it  
the poor sap whose blood it is waits next door  
twiddling his thumbs  
and looking at the stains on the wall  
where nurses have made bank shots  
with the sanitary caps from the digital thermometer  
I've counted all my money  
cleaned my billfold of old business cards  
tossed bits of notes with long since forgotten messages and names  
I lift my head and ear like a deer sensing danger  
Elvis' voice is fading,  
moving away into the mysterious place  
behind the door leading to his green room  
I yearn for him to come in  
like a hunk of burning love  
and give me the answers  
but now I panic  
I think he's retreated to his bus  
parked outside the clinic  
where his women are  
so I place my ear against the cool, blonde wood  
of the inner sanctum door  
all I can hear is the faint rustling of paper  
I decide the investigation  
into my demise  
is about to end abruptly



## TIFFANY OLDAKER

*Tiff's 67*

Acrylic Paint



I've had it  
now I really don't care what is wrong with me  
so I jerk the open the door  
and stare into the startled, sanctimonious face  
of his battle-axe nurse,  
shouting  
"Has Elvis left the building  
or what?"

JEREMY AKERS

## Dénouement

"I have come under incredible stress as of recently."

"You have?"

Rachel nodded.

"Tell me about it."

Roger leaned forward enough to establish his interest. "Tell me, go on."

"Roger," Rachel said, "look, I want to show you something. But first: Listen. Okay?"

"Okay." He nodded. There was the reassurance. He touched her hand with his. "Okay."

She pulled away.

"Roger, last night—"

"Last night just happened, that's all."

"No. What? No, not that. No. Listen. Last night, after you left—"

"I left you asleep."

"After you left—I wasn't asleep, no—when I heard the door shut tight, I got up and made some cocoa."

"I could have."

"No. I make my cocoa. And after that, I wrapped up in my grandmother's quilt—you know the brown one? the one I keep on the couch?—I sat at my desk with my cocoa in my grandmother's blanket and I opened up my laptop. I felt, I don't know how to say it, I just felt like writing."

"That's great!"

"It wasn't you, Roger. You're not my muse. Last night isn't about *last night*."

She stood up.

"Rachel?"

"I'm thirsty. Hold on. But do you want something?"

"What are you getting?"

"Gin."

"Gin? Honey, it's barely four."

"So water for you then?"

Roger rested his chin on his interlocked fingers.

"Gin and lime."

"Two then. Roger?" She was in the kitchen.

"Yeah?"

"Ice?"

"Yes, please."

She brought the drinks.

"I realized something," she said, handing him his drink.

"Did you? What?"

"I realized why I felt like writing last night. It's like—just, have you noticed that everything just seemed to fall in place last night? And I mean us, now, as much as anything else; like what happened was the final link in this long, invisible chain of events."

"I—last night, it was nice. I wouldn't take it back."

"I know Roger. I'm not asking you to. But after that, after you left, everything felt so universally complete. I felt so inspired. You know? Like I just knew at that moment that the next stage in life, I was going to do something just great."

"I don't doubt you are." He sipped.

"Have you ever watched a movie, or read a book, and at the end it all works out. It's cliché. You know. I know. Everyone knows. And we can go on with our own lives rest assured that their fictional lives are forever without turmoil or true hardships again."

"That's not really how I interpret most happy endings."

"But the stuff in the movie or the book, that's the most significant things that will likely happen in their lives. Yeah? Nothing else they ever do will ever compare. Or else the writer would write another book about them. Or there'd be a sequel. No, most of them go on to live uneventful lives. Or maybe great lives. But not significant ones."

"I'm not really following you, honey. Could you slow down, too. Look, you've already almost drunk all your gin."

She finished off the glass and shook her head.

"Fuck this."

"What? Honey, what's gotten into you?"

"No, I refuse to let the rest of my life be meaningless."

"Your life isn't meaningless."

"I'm not going to just fade away. You hear?" She looked up, as if to God. "Goddammit, you hear me?"

"Calm down. You're worrying me." She took his glass and finished it off. "Slow down, geez Rachel."

"There's only one way this is going to end. Are you ready to see what I called you over for?"

Roger nodded slowly.

She stood up, holding both glasses.

"I know how I'm ending my book already," she said.

"Oh?"

He stood to follow her.

"Deus ex Machina."

"Isn't that bad form?"

"Mmm," she nodded.

She put a cube of ice in her mouth and rinsed both glasses.

"Do you know what it's about, yet?"

She bit down on the ice.



ERICA SEAGRAVES

*Roaring 20's*

Intaglio Aquatint Print



"I did."

She led him to the front door.

"Where are we going?"

"Outside," she said.

It was autumn, golden and windy.

"At least wear my coat," he offered.

"Mm mmm," she refused.

"A little chilly, but it's a beautiful day out."

"It is," she smiled. "Roger?"

"I'm here," he squinted in the sun.

"Sometimes, when a story refuses to end, it still has to. You know?"

"Rachel, are you breaking up with me?" He laughed.

"No," she turned from him.

"Rachel?"

"Have you ever seen an act of God?" she asked.

He shook his head.

"No."

With the sun in his eyes, he only heard the car hit her.

NATE ELAM

---

### Premeditated Sunset

I murdered  
today,  
stabbing at Sunset  
mightier than my pen.

Followed him home,  
caught his blood,  
bandage sky soaked it up,  
dabbed it dry.

Accomplice Moon;  
she looks surprised,  
helps me get back  
in the dark.

Drowned a Memory in salt water,  
left it for dead,  
always finds its way back,  
like a stray dog I used to feed.

These Hills are old  
bones;  
a forgotten carcass,  
called home.

### **Nail Prints**

Bless me father, lie  
before the altar,  
open sanctuary windows  
turn Bible pages,  
prophetic semaphores  
chanting  
thou shalt not,  
thou shalt not.  
This was my body,  
broken,  
made to touch him,  
pretend your son  
doesn't play with boys.

This is his blood,  
baptismal fuck,  
go down three times, still  
taste like holy water  
in my mouth.  
Do this in remembrance of me.

### **Eighteen Marigolds**

*(Inscape student prose prize winner)*

Michu woke to a slow throbbing in her chest. It followed each heartbeat with a slight delay that seemed to steadily increase. She thought that it felt like the moment in time before falling backwards, when time stops. The next beat came after an eternity and she sat up to catch her breath, holding her chest with both hands, the throbbing passed. The first rays were peeking through her window; this would be a busy morning. The angry, Southern Mexico sun was already heating up her room, and though she wanted to stay in bed Michu knew that there would be no chance of dozing back off. Her little brother would be up soon, hungry and expecting to be entertained. After all this was a holiday. Michu silently wished her mother were here to make all the preparations, or that her grandmother was well enough to at least help. Three years now her grandmother had been sick, and rarely left the house. This left all the cooking, cleaning, and worst of all, the care of her little brother to her alone. Thinking about this sort of thing always left her in a bad mood, and she tried to get on with her chores.

Michu felt the weight of all she must do today bear down on her like a charging bull. Steam from the sink full of last night's dishes carried the sour smell of old food to her nose. There were little bits of tomato, pieces of eggshells, tortillas, and sausage making rancid constellations in the hot soapy water. She waited for it to cool. Despite the smell she stayed over the sink thinking of all the preparations. There were the candy skulls to make, marigolds to gather, breakfast, lunch, dinner, graves to decorate, the list went on and on stretching out before her like a rattlesnake sunning itself on the porch, ready to be stepped on by little feet. She felt the weight increase, dirty steam on her face, the breath of the bull as he got very close, near enough to smell. Thrusting her hands into the dirty water she began to scrub the crust off of the plates, it had turned into a paste in the hot water. She felt herself drift off slowly, down into the sink. First she was up to her elbows, then her head, and finally her torso slipped into the swamp. Her eyes slowly adjusted to the grease. She began to swim, kicking her legs deliberately and in unison like a dolphin. Quickly changing course, she narrowly avoided a steak knife hidden under a bowl that had been there since breakfast the day before. The warmth of the water made her sleepy. She was thinking of how nice it would be to never again come up for air when she sensed something behind her. It started as a shadow on the edge of her vision, but no matter how suddenly she turned her body it remained just out of sight. Soon it loomed behind her, monstrous, eclipsing the light from the window above. She struggled to get out from under it, but could no longer tell which way was up in darkness, her lungs were about to burst from lack of air when she felt a small hand on the back of her leg. Opening her eyes and pulling her hands from the water, Michu turned to see her little brother Xochi tugging on the back of her pant leg.

He wanted to know why she was sleeping while standing up with her hands in the dishwater. He wanted something to eat. He wanted to know when they were going to get dressed up for the holiday, when he was getting some candy, how long it would take to make him some eggs, if it was going to rain and so on. When he went on like this in a deluge of questions it was hard for Michu not to fantasize about stuffing something in his mouth, perhaps the dishrag? It was wet so it would go down easy, and she smiled when thinking of how much he would enjoy the taste. She ignored him and went to start his eggs. The butter smelled sour when it made contact with the skillet, it was a little old. When frying the eggs she made sure to leave a few bits of shell in. Xochi would complain, and she would tell him the shells were high in calcium, and good for him. He would go on whining about it, and she would have a little smile on her face as she thought how funny it was to tell her brother such things. It was true after all, that the shells were high in calcium. She had heard her neighbor Senor Marquez talking about it as he turned his compost heap over with a large shovel. Yes, eggshells made great fertilizer; if you throw some of your old ones into the compost it was very helpful. Michu felt happy tears sting her eyes, thinking how nice it would be if her brother were a squash.

An old voice gently croaked in the next room. Realizing it was her grandmother, Michu hurried to get her a glass of tomato juice, which was her regular breakfast. Michu's grandmother Teresa smiled at her as she approached the bed awkwardly; trying not to spill the full glass she was carrying. Unlike some of the other old women Michu knew; *her* grandmother still had all her teeth, but rarely smiled. Michu was surprised to see her in a good mood; usually she complained of headaches and never got out of bed. Grandmother was always ordering Michu around, and anytime she did something wrong grandmother would say, "You are your mother's daughter" in a tone that made Michu think that must be a bad thing.

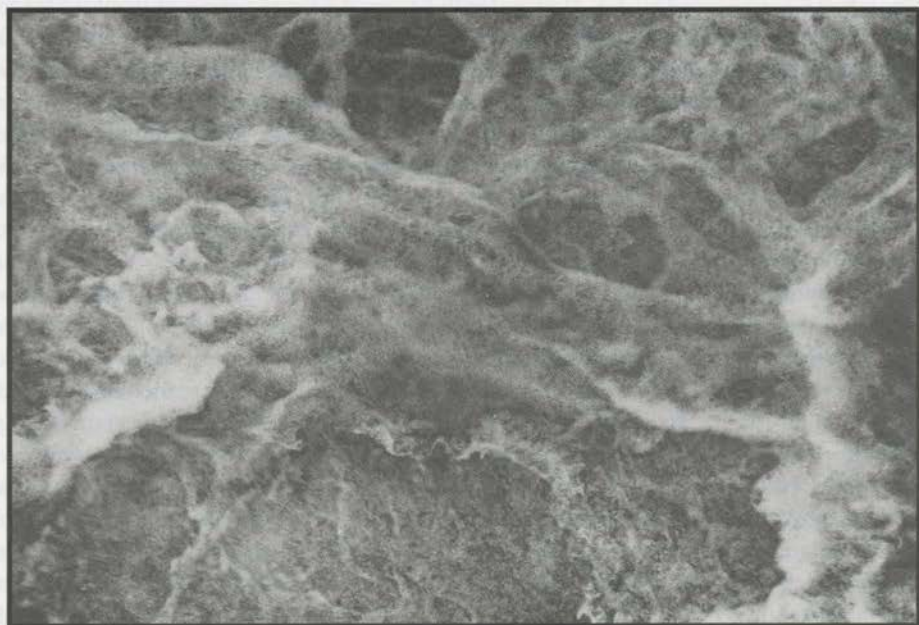


"Forget the dishes," grandmother said. "It's *Día de los Muertos*, you have enough to do already."

Michu was very grateful for her grandmother's rare mood, she hated dishes. As she helped the old woman take a drink, she couldn't help but be reminded of *calacas* when looking at her grandmother's skeletal features. The tomato juice slowly reached the top of the glass as she raised it to her grandmother's mouth. There was something terrible about watching her drink. Michu felt she should look away. What seemed like a long time passed, and she slowly looked back to see a glass of blood being lapped up by a hungry skull. Michu had seen skulls like that at the old, ruined altar by the cemetery. Her neighbor, Señor Marquez, told her the Aztecs had built those altars for human sacrifices; they were covered with large stone skulls baring their teeth in bloodthirsty smiles. When the men of the town built houses they would find old bones in the ground. They would take the bones to the altar and leave them there to honor the spirits of the dead. The pile of bones on the bed became all washed in blood because the skull gulped down the blood too fast and it splashed everywhere, gushing down the aqueduct of its spinal column onto the bones then spilling over onto the floor in torrents, filling up the room. Michu tried hard to hang on to the bed post; she could feel herself slipping around in the blood. It splashed in her mouth and tasted better than she had expected, a little metallic but sweet, like it came out of a can. As if there were a factory somewhere squeezing people like tomatoes, reaming them on a gigantic dome, twisting them down, blood spilling over the sides and onto a grate to strain out the pulp. The room was filling up now and Michu could hear herself screaming in the distance, her voice sounded old and decrepit, and like it was choking on something. Suddenly a boney hand reached up and smacked her in the face. She looked down at her grandmother who was staring at her in disbelief, wiping her mouth and coughing, covered in tomato juice. She ran to get some towels with tears in her eyes.

Michu always had the strangest dreams. They had started five years ago when her mother died, five years ago today. She confessed to the priest that she had morbid visions all the time, even when she was awake. He instructed her to pray when such things entered her mind. She tried to do as she was told, but this only intensified the waking dreams. Once while seeing her dead mother's face on her little brother she had begun to pray, asking God to take these images from her mind. It seemed to work at first, and then she noticed it was hard to breathe. She felt a sharp pain in her wrists and feet, and the sting of cold raindrops hitting her bare shoulders. Her body felt altogether different, not her own, large like a man's, and in a voice that was not her own she heard herself saying terrible things, mocking Jesus, saying that if he were truly the son of God he would save himself and her. Looking to her left she saw her Lord on the cross, suffering terribly, she wanted to go to him but realized that her own wrists were nailed to a heavy wooden beam, and looking down saw herself suspended in the air on the left of Christ, atop a hill, overlooking a city she didn't recognize. The sky was black, and again she heard a voice jeering at Jesus, it seemed to come from her, but no matter how she tried she couldn't stop it. It was very hard to breathe, but her mind began to work. Thinking this must be a dream, she began to struggle for consciousness. She thought she must be either waking up or dying as she felt herself drift out over the hill, allowing a panoramic view of the horrible scene. Then she saw the face of the hill and remembered its name, Golgotha, the place of the skull. It faded out of her vision, and she saw her little brother looking at her. Xochi had asked her,

"Why are you crying, sister?"



LAURA HAYWOOD

*Flow*

Black & White Photograph



She wiped her eyes and didn't answer, overwhelmed by what she had just seen. That had been two years ago, and she hadn't prayed since, not once.

After cleaning up her grandmother Michu decided busy herself with the preparations, desperately wanting this day to be over. Xochi was playing in his eggs, this annoyed her but she didn't stop him, at least he was occupied for the moment. She walked outside and down the dusty path that lead to the garden where the marigolds grew, remembering to carry the shears with the blades pointed towards her as she had always been told. She would hate to walk into someone with them pointed the other way, and accidentally stab them. It had become a dreary day, strange for this time of year, but she was thankful for the shade. It was sticky and humid; the gray sky holding back torrents of rain that she thought would certainly fall at any moment. The marigolds were in full bloom but the gray sky cast a sickly light on everything, she wondered why there had to be a day just for the dead, they had taken too many of her days already, and always wanted more. Michu snipped the stems of the marigolds at an angle. Señor Marquez had told her this would allow them to take in water, and live a little longer in the vase. She took her time, happy to be out of the house for once, cutting the flowers leisurely and placing them in a basket her mother had made. A sad smile crossed her face as she thought of her mother with a huge belly, ready to burst.

It had been almost six years since that man had come around with his camera taking pictures of the old churches and ruins. They had been in the market one day buying groceries when the stranger started snapping pictures of her mother. Michu didn't like the way he spoke, his words were choppy and of a funny shape. The man always seemed to be searching for his next word like he had forgotten it. He had long hair and a shaggy beard. His eyes were hard to look into, a bright blue that made you want to look away, eyes that looked through you. Michu started tugging at her mothers skirt wanting to leave, but Mama ignored her. She was smiling back at the man talking in a tone that Michu didn't recognize, standing with her hip to one side, left hand absently moving from her hair to her shoulder and back again. After throwing a fit Michu managed to get her mother out of the white mans gaze and back to the house. Mama was always leaving after she met strange men. The routine was something Michu had come to accept. Mama would take her to her Grandmother's, and while Michu went down to the garden to play she would hear raised voices coming from the house arguing about things she couldn't make sense of. Something about confession and her mother living up to her name, Maria, whatever that meant. Then her mother would leave, not returning till the next morning.

Michu never saw the man again, but after a while she began to notice a swelling in her mother's belly. Nine months after the man with the blue eyes stopped them in the market Michu was going to the cemetery with her family when her mother, who could barely walk, doubled over. Grandmother responded by telling Michu to run to Senor Marquez's as fast as she could and ask him to bring his truck. By this time, she had the vague understanding that she was going to have a little brother or sister, and that her mother was a woman that people whispered about in church. It was the day of the dead, and people were in the street making it hard for Michu to run without bumping into someone. She passed a huge old woman with a tray of sugar skulls and stopped. They smiled at her with rows of large teeth which were all the more striking because the lady had none.

"Such a pretty little girl," said the old woman, "what is your name?" "Mictecacihuatl," Michu said, "but I go by Michu for short."



"That is a powerful name, an Aztec name," whispered the woman with eyes wide, "Have a piece of candy."

Michu took the skull and bit into it. It was so sweet it hurt her teeth, but she gobbled it down anyway. The street was full of skeletons, demons, imps, and the walking dead dressed in their finest cloths. A brass band passed by playing a dirge that seemed to also be dead, dragging itself note by note down the street in search of something it left behind in life, like a ghost. Michu took a deep breath that smelled like a thousand kitchens cooking, and took in the spectacle of the parade as if seeing it for the first time. She wandered around until she suddenly remembered her errand, and began to run full speed towards the house of Senor Marquez. Approaching his house, which was next to grandmother's, she heard a woman screaming in pain. Recognizing her mother's voice she burst into the house unable to speak, taking huge breaths and trying to explain. No one seemed to notice her presence. Grandmother was speaking rapidly to some of the neighborhood women, giving orders and wiping Mama's face with a towel. They were holding Mama down on the kitchen table. she was naked and moaning. Michu caught the strangest scent in the air, not so much a smell but a taste; it was warm, and very unpleasant. She breathed through her nose, but that wasn't any better, she tried not to throw up. The doctor was saying something about the baby; that it was dying inside Mama, and would have to be taken out. Michu wondered what that meant. Grandmother saw her, and rushed over swearing in a hushed voice,

"Where the hell have you been? Can't you see how badly you've hurt your mother?" She grabbed Michu by the arm with an icy grip, dragging her from the room.

"Stay here and pray God will forgive you," she hissed.

Mama's screams started again, and Grandmother went back to the kitchen. Michu quietly snuck back to the edge of the room to watch. The doctor was putting what looked like a tea strainer over her mother's mouth with one hand, and allowing drops of liquid from a green bottle to fall onto it with the other. Her mother stopped screaming and became unconscious almost instantly. Then the doctor took out a small knife and began to cut open Mama's belly straight down the middle in a way that reminded Michu of the time she had seen the butcher clean a pig. She tried to scream but her throat was shut. She wanted to cry out, to make the butcher stop, when she heard a strange sound. It was a strained cry that started faintly, muffled as if under a pillow then grew loud, grating against her ears. The butcher lifted a slick, red creature out of her mother that had a blue cord coming out of his belly. He hastily cut the cord allowing fluid to spill out of the end like a water hose with the spicket freshly turned off, and handed the thing to Grandmother. Michu cursed the creature for hurting her mother.

A sharp pain in the tip of her finger brought Michu out of her reverie. Looking down, she saw blood dripping from the edge of her finger where the shears had cut her. She put the finger in her mouth and began to count the marigolds; she counted eighteen, and thought that would be perfect. On the walk back to the house she began to feel the throbbing again. It started in her neck and moved down into her chest. Michu hoped it wouldn't become large and have to be removed, she hated the butcher. Reaching the kitchen, she was surprised to find it empty. Xochi was usually there, but she didn't call for him because it felt good to be alone, like the inside of a warm box left in the sun. She decided at once to get the altars ready for this evening. There were the pictures to gather, candles to light, and the skulls. She mustn't forget the skulls. Opening the cabinet and taking out the sugar, Michu could feel something behind her again. The shadow seemed to wait behind her

ready to anticipate her movements, but she didn't try to look at it this time. Instead she gathered the ingredients for the candy skulls, and absently looked for red food coloring. All the while the shadow grew, and Michu waited for the right moment to turn around and see it, whatever it was. After forming the last ball of sugar into an acceptable shape, she laid it down on the tray and spun around to see her mother standing before her. Tears filled Michu's eyes as she ran to Mama, wrapping lonely arms around her waist.

"Where have you been so long, Mama," she cried, so overcome with a feeling of safety that Michu thought she could curl up and go to sleep right there on the floor.

"Sorry I've been away, *Niña*, but I've come back now to help you with the preparations. You have been such a good girl," her mother said in a voice that sounded like wind blowing through dry flowers.

Michu had never been so happy. Together, she and her mother set up three little tables in the kitchen to become altars for the dead. The tables were laden with pictures, fruit, toys for dead children, bottles of beer for dead adults, also some fried eggs, tomato juice, and plenty of marigolds. Michu thought this would be the finest *Día de los Muertos* in dying memory, and hugged her mother again. They spent the rest of the afternoon drawing faces on candy skulls, and putting the names of the dead on them, Mama said it was *tradición*. The skulls would be eaten by relatives to honor the dead. Mama even showed Michu a special ingredient that came from a green bottle under the sink, it would make the candy very special, Mama said so.

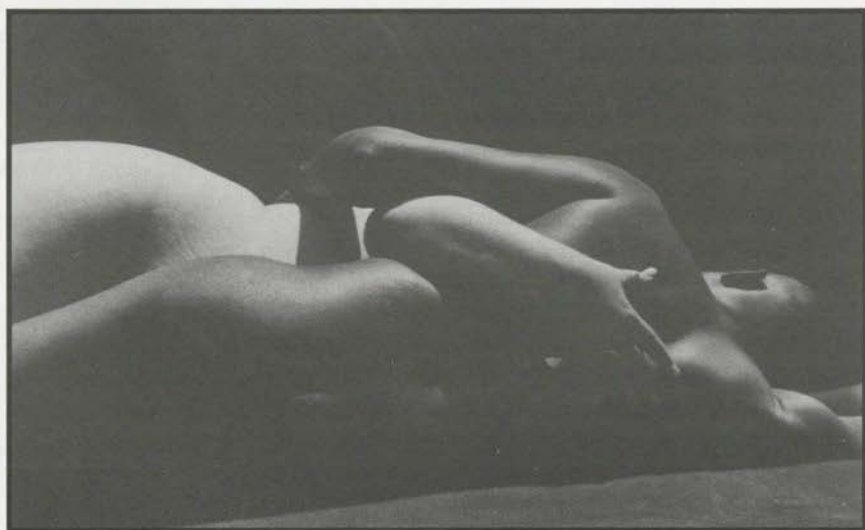
Soon Xochi came in from playing outside, but didn't say hello to Mama. Michu thought he was a rude little bastard, but she wasn't going to misbehave since Mama had come home. He started asking questions about the altars, little annoying questions that made her want to shove something in his mouth, so she gave him a piece of candy. He ate it as if he were starving, and asked when they were getting dressed up for the holiday. Michu told him to go play outside; she would be there in a moment after giving Grandmother a piece. She entered the bedroom quietly with the tray of candies just in case Grandmother was sleeping.

"Where have you been all day?" asked Grandmother tired voice. Michu didn't answer her, but instead held out a tiny skull. Grandmother seemed to forget Michu's neglect of her as she ate the candy; she said it was very good. She said she was proud of Michu's hard work, but there was a strange aftertaste to the candy, like licorice, or maybe even alcohol.

After making sure that everyone had a piece of candy to eat, including herself, Michu set about helping her mother hang some decorations. It occurred to her that mother was acting a little strange, not speaking, but rather directing her to do this or that task, like a mime. Mama was gesturing to a little doll; she wanted it to be hung from the ceiling with the little skeletons they had made for decorations. After helping tie the knot, Mama lifted her onto a stool to hang the doll. Michu smiled as she placed the rope around its neck. Looking down she realized that there was a nasty brown stain going down the center of her mother's blouse, and was about to ask what it was when she heard a sharp crack, like a board snapping. She looked then into Mama's eyes, they were glazed over, unseeing. As she looked deeper, Michu thought she saw little points of light in the center of them. She stared at the lights as they became bigger, turning into beacons on a dark sea that was gently rocking her to sleep.

Señor Marquez stepped out of his front door to get a breath of the evening air. The scent of marigolds was stronger than usual, and the wind was whispering faintly as blowing





# RIA KEETON

## *Confluence II*

Black & White Photography



through dry leaves. He made a *cigarillo* and lit it, watching the blue smoke trail off in widening spirals towards the house next door when he noticed something odd. He thought it was very strange to see the little boy sleeping in the yard, but then again his neighbors had been strange for a long time. He thought of how tragic it was that Michu had lost her mother so young, and that it too much responsibility for a little girl to look after her brother when she was only eleven. He went to wake the little boy and found that he was cold, dead. Senor Marquez ran to the house as fast as he could shouting for someone to help, but stopped short inside the doorway. There were three little altars nicely decorated with candles, pictures, food, beer, toys, and six marigolds a piece. His *cigarillo* slipped absently through his fingers as he saw the little girl swaying gently on the breeze, and the candy skulls bearing three names: Teresa, Xochi, and Michu.

## GARY WALTON

### Eschatology Escadrille<sup>1</sup>

"Do not weep maiden, for war is kind"

—Stephen Crane

"That's a fellow now that'd sell his country for a fourpence—eye!—and go down on his bended knees and thank the Almighty Christ he had a country to sell."

—James Joyce, "Ivy Day in the Committee Room"

#### i

When the Fourth Estate

Has become a Fifth Column—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

Should we sing about the end times

Or just remain solemn?

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

#### ii

Is it rapture or rupture?

I never can remember—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

And mass dissimulation

Has become the legal tender—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

#### iii

Should we moan "*Kyrie Eleison*"?

Mes amis, s'il vous plait—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

No, let's recite a Kaddish

Or better still, a Rondolet?

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

iv

'Cause I'm gonna drive my Hummer™

and my big black SUV—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

'Til the polar ice cap melts

And kills both you and me—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

v

The "*ding en sich*"

Is such a quaint notion—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

As we drop democratic bombs

In the sand across the ocean—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

vi

Squint into the space

Between what's done and said—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

And you can see the truth oozing

From the wounded and the dead—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

vii

It's not what we know;

It's what you will believe—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

Remember, the ace in the hole

Is always hiding up our sleeve—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

viii

So, sit back, relax

Don't ask the reasons why—

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

There'll be no time for questions

No time to say goodbye!

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

xi

Ye shall surely reap

Such seeds as ye did sow —

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

And when we come to get you —

(and we will)

—Don't say I didn't tell you so!

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

<sup>1</sup>To be recited with the verve of the huckster Professor Harold Hill of The Music Man.

## HARRY BROWN

For B. H. M.

These are only hints and guesses,

Hints followed by guesses; and the rest

Is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action.

The hint half guessed, the gift half understood, is Incarnation.

—T. S. Eliot, The Dry Salvages

At this time of most mystery in every direction,

what shall I say? After the long ago degrees with growing love

of Dickinson, T. S. Eliot, Shakespeare, Reynolds Price,

et alia, veins of our Mother Lode, till they grew close

beloved siblings living all beneath your roof; after decades

of routine committees (with sensible and lazy members, the competent

along with fools), overpopulated committees, unnecessary

committees, soporific committees, eternal committees, eternal meetings

and colleagues with eternal muscular ids and eternal,

Olympian egos; after concomitant decades

of enjoying rare, sterling souls like Cratis rooted like oaks

in rich, sharply focused vision told in sparse, quiet words

twenty-four carat souls whose presence refreshed you, blessed your day;

after decades of other wonderful common deities,



souls taken with good of students, colleagues, family;  
after decades of helping students glimpse, and sometimes see, the complex  
ambiguity darkness offering light,  
struggle toward reconciliation, humor and wit salting growth  
into order more or less in our beloved Mother Lode  
and thus our Life; after decades of this ever enriching,  
ever wearing sea of pupils and students, the ebb and flow  
of half your life your painful plenitude, your curse and grace at once  
the myriad youth you helped hone their feelings, thoughts, and lives  
into well built rooms of words with doors strong and squared  
the reader could enter to clearly consider substance, and depart enlightened.  
After you departed and didn't depart all this and Boone  
to compose a lovely home in Greensboro rife with music, books,  
and art; to cherish more closely more often both your daughter and son  
and their offspring; to follow Saint Stephen, to care for the grieving and ill;  
to struggle, serve, and grow, to live and love in another place  
only to be suddenly blind-sided bludgeoned all too soon  
by Darkness, and enter at peace into Light with courage and no regrets.  
A good teacher, you modeled this closing paragraph with organization,  
confident confirmation of thesis and body, suggestions for future  
implications--a legacy of curiosity, kindness,  
and Love.

### **Metal Most Attractive**

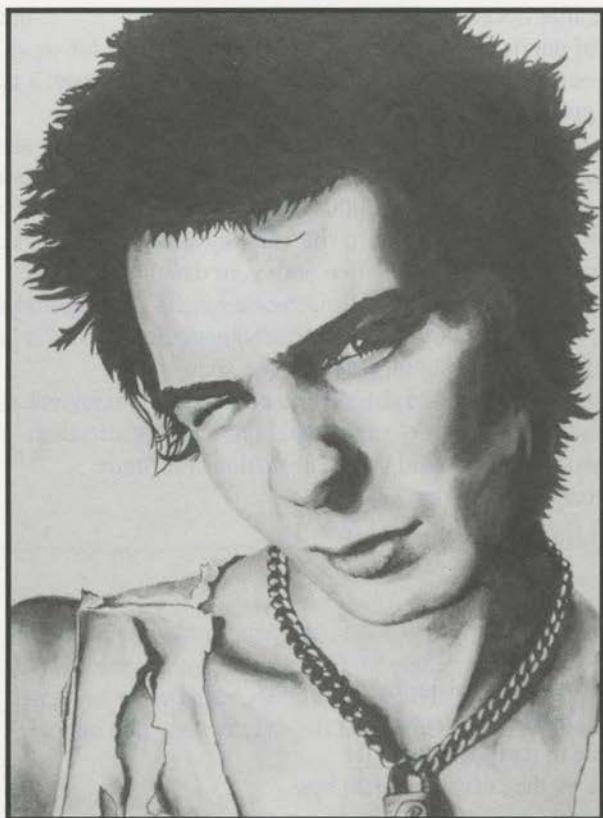
Short blond hair as fine as its sister fern;  
A pair of ripe, hanging pears; tears  
On a downcast face in partial silhouette  
With surge of rose on the curve of cheek; tips  
Of bananas in a bunch.

My Eros eye  
A compass needle apprenticed to compare.

### **We All Wear Warts; Or, If**

*for Gwyn Rubio*

you see warts  
(or tics)  
on somemore near,  
open your eyes  
You're standing  
before  
a mirror.



## JORDAN HAMPTON

*Sid*

Marker

**Reality TV**

It happened a few months after her fall  
 When the scooter Mom used to get around the house  
 Raced in reverse into the counter and flipped over  
 Flinging her to the floor where hip bones turned to egg shells  
 Cracked and pale skin turned black with bruising.

Now, 9 months later, the detectives from "Law & Order"  
 Walk around her living room and she wants to give them back their evidence.  
 She sleeps with the television on and thinks she has been kidnapped  
 Or tied up in blankets and left on the couch.  
 After an episode of "Charmed", her caretaker magically transformed into Phoebe.

I usually just nod and try to reassure her when I can.  
 I wait for those instances, rare as an episode of "M\*A\*S\*H" we haven't seen,  
 when she is herself again.  
 When the next one arrives, I will call out "Now. Do it now!"  
 And Piper will step from "Charmed" and fling her fingers out  
 In the magical gesture and time will freeze. Mom will be held there  
 Trapped in magical amber, herself once more for all time.

**If my mother were a book**

She would not be a mystery  
 Though that was her favorite genre  
 Before her eyesight gave way to the years.  
 No, she is straightforward, no suspense,  
 Not even Miss Marple or Poirot  
 Could find a dark secret waiting to be uncovered.

She would not be a romance.  
 Certainly not the thick bodice-rippers  
 With half-naked men and sultry women on the covers  
 Nor even the thin ones that take up shelf  
 after shelf at the used book stores.  
 Though she had three marriage proposals,  
 She would not be a romance.  
 Even with my father, love lived but the romance left  
 A few months after the wedding,  
 lost to morning sickness  
 And too many nights that he stayed at the bar.



She would not be a fantasy  
A genre she does not like  
And will not read, even when I write it.  
She never wished to meet dragons  
Or go on quests for treasures across the seas.  
No, I think all her fantasies are long gone  
Any that remain would never be published.

She would not fit into any genre.  
But if she were a book,  
It would be worn with creases on its pages  
Its spine cracked, its cover stained with tears  
Worn out through age  
Or perhaps worn through love.

CLARK B. BASIL

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## No Rest For The Wicked

### CHAPTER 1

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Roscoe Knowles slowed down to 95 miles per hour to reflect a moment. He felt like the sad truth of his life was, that after you added up all the parts, the total was something between minus three and minus four. And the real sad part, to him, was he felt like he was going out with such a whimper. The potential for going out with a bang was there, along with the opportunity for his life to be on the plus side; had always been there, but it seemed that every time, Roscoe managed somehow to land in the boat just 50 calories shy of a milkshake.

There was traffic in the right lane ahead, so Roscoe pulled into the left lane. As he accelerated back toward 120 miles per hour, his peripheral vision caught a glimpse of the Indiana State Trooper he was passing. Roscoe realized things were back to normal; the rubber duck in his tub was leaking again, and if he stopped now, he would have to give some money to the big, bad policeman.

Shit, Roscoe thought. So what if Mr. Smokey Bear gets the tag number. I'm wearing gloves, so if I can somehow ditch him, an abandoned stolen car won't leave him with any evidence of me. He pushed the accelerator of the 2005 Sebring all the way to the floor.

Now, under normal circumstances, Trooper Jon Cordella would never have let the Sebring get away, but he had been on his cell to Deanna Fine when the red blur went past. By the time he exchanged three 'I love you, I love you more's' with her and a 'Really have to go. Love.' and then turned his siren on and pulled out; two tractor trailers were side by side. It wasn't much of an incline, but the driver of the Burger King rig was inspired by the sight of Roscoe flying down the road, and decided to pass P.I.E. He laughed over the CB, "Catch me if you can!", and all traffic behind slowed as the truckers played out their uphill competition. Jon called the 58th Headquarters to inform them he was attempting to engage in a high-speed chase.

The road ahead was clear for Roscoe and his recently borrowed Sebring. After a couple miles and three curves, he decided to try an escape off Exit 167. About a minute after he pulled under the bridge and parked, he heard the sound of a siren go overhead as Trooper Cordella hotly pursued a car no longer traveling I-68. Roscoe breathed deeply, and thought maybe he had adjusted life up to a minus one.

As he thought about moving to a better location for vehicle abandonment, and perhaps confiscation of another, a Mustang pulled in behind him. Roscoe's eyes widened as he got a fairly good look at the woman behind the wheel.

Well, she looks mighty damn fine, Roscoe thought. What the hell is she doing here? He decided to check it out, rather than run.

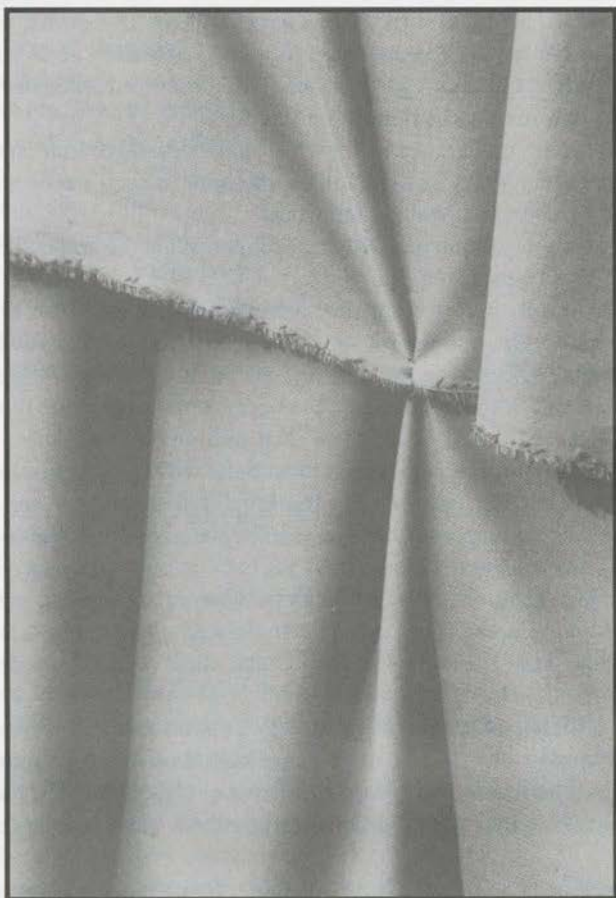
Jenna Lamech's curiosity had compelled her to get off the Exit 167 ramp, and see if the cop had been given the slip. She wasn't sure why it mattered, but her life had been quite a mess lately, so watching Roscoe accelerate and eventually disappear triggered a desire to see if she could be a part of the excitement. As she opened the door, she thought, If Jackson could see me now, three shades of purple; he'd be shitting three shades.

Jenna walked to the Sebring and leaned toward the window that Roscoe had just rolled down. She knew that she was being totally irrational, but she didn't care. She had vowed yesterday that she was through with Jackson, and by the gods who oversaw revenge in the universe, she was determined that she would get back at him somehow. She was looking at a man with curly reddish-brown hair, freckles that were accented by a boyish grin, and a relatively firm looking body. Jenna consciously looked down at the driver's crotch, and then back to his inquisitive eyes. 'Hi, I'm Jenna,' she said, 'And I like your style. Anything I can do to help?'

Roscoe deliberately let his eyes travel slowly from her long, ginger red hair, down to her cleavage, then further, to her faded denim mini-skirt. Looking back into her deep brown eyes he smiled, and then answered, 'And I'm Roscoe. I guess I could use a lift.' He got out of the Sebring and pulled off his gloves, stuffing them into the right rear pocket of his Levis.

As they walked back to the rose beige Mustang, Jenna thought about what to do next. She obviously couldn't go home. And if Jackson ever found out what she had just done, he would hypocritically start in with stupid shit, like marriage licenses, and fidelity. He thought that a marriage license gave him a license to hit, and the closest thing he knew to fidelity was their insurance company. Well, Jackson could just kiss what he referred to as her boring little ass.

Roscoe held back a step so he could further scrutinize Jenna. She had a pair of sexy legs that were made even more enticing by calf-high, fur-trimmed, brown suede boots. Roscoe noted that her buttocks were well formed by his cultural descriptions, and that included no 'visible signs of sagging'. If questioned, Roscoe would have to admit that his definition of 'nice woman' started with the shape of her body, and typically, never dealt much with personality aspects. And, usually, Roscoe never stayed in a relationship long enough to care about that. Along the pathway that made up his life, he had never gotten much beyond the juvenile "find 'em, feel 'em, fuck 'em, forget 'em" stage. While looking Jenna over, Roscoe asked himself if perhaps he had wrecked the Sebring during the chase and had somehow arrived at the Pearly Gates. He thought, those hardcore terrorist suicide bombers who are expecting seventy young virgins can have them all. I'll settle for this one experienced-looking young woman.



MANDY GERMAN

*Untitled*

Black & White Photograph



They got into the car and Roscoe flashed back to when he was seven years old and had decided to cut a tree limb with his father's new pruning saw.

He positioned himself precariously on the not-so-large branch and started to rip his incision. Unfortunately for Roscoe, he was cutting on the limb between himself and the trunk. It didn't take long for the branch to snap, and Roscoe landed screaming for help on his buttocks. His mother showed sympathy, concern, and just all round TLC. His father laughed until tears came down his cheeks.

Roscoe glanced over at the sexy woman starting the Mustang and thought; I wish that son-of-a-bitch could see me now. I'll bet he wouldn't be laughing.

Roscoe knew, of course, that his father wasn't able to see him; it had been six years since the funeral. But still the relationship they had never had stayed close at hand like a chigger bite. Of course, Roscoe knew he was wrong in thinking 'the relationship they never had', an abusive relationship was still that, a relationship, and, even after his death, Roscoe resented his father. On the other hand, Roscoe's mother, Zelda, had seemed to have that unnerving ability to tolerate everything that his father had thrown her way, and still proclaim her love for the bastard.

Roscoe had not meant to upset his mother the day of the funeral. The services were over with, and they were on their way from the Maplewood Church of Saints Awaiting the Imminent Return of Jesus Christ In These Last Days to the hillside behind Randall Knowles' old home place, where he was to be buried. Roscoe was bitterly laughing to himself over the preacher's words how he had talked on many occasions with Randall Knowles about the afterlife, and that he was confident that Randall was now resting in the arms of God's great forgiveness and peace.

Peace, Roscoe thought, I hope not. I think that he ought to have to endure some form of Purgatory for awhile." About that time, a car approaching from the other direction blew a tire and sideswiped the hearse carrying Randall Knowles' remains. In the ensuing misadventure, the rear door of the hearse swung open, the casket somehow broke free, and Randall Knowles wound up face down in the ditch. Roscoe couldn't help but laugh, and for the only time that he could recall in his life, his mother backhanded him across the mouth.

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Julie Wright, dispatcher for the 58th State Police Headquarters in Frankenberg, Indiana, took the call from Trooper Todd Truitt and decided that she had better double-check what she thought she had just listened to, so she asked, "Todd, would you repeat that. I'm not so sure I heard you correctly."

"Oh, I'll bet you did," said Truitt. "What I said was, I am downtown, at Hargis Street, and I have just pulled a man over who was weaving all over Main Street on a riding lawn mower."

Julie immediately had visions of a Grand Marshal on his lawn mower leading a parade of automobiles through town as she replied, "That's what I thought you said. Just for the record," she asked, "what kind of mower?"

"John Deere. Green. Not sure what year."

Julie laughed. "Well, good work, Trooper T. Keep us informed." Julie shook her head, smiling. Todd Truitt was an older trooper who looked like he was near, or even past, retirement age, but he always seemed motivated and ready to hit the road at the beginning of every shift. He looked like he kept in excellent shape, but his medium brown hair had

traces of gray peeking through. When he smiled, it seemed as though he was holding back from letting it develop into a full-blown one, as it never quite reached his hazel-green eyes that seemed to be hiding some sort of sadness. Julie wondered how the man she was visualizing was handling a lawn mower DUI.

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On rare occasions, and this was one of them, the hardest part of his job was not laughing at an inappropriate time. If anyone knew, Todd Truitt did, that drunk driving was a serious offense, and not at all a laughing matter. He reminded himself of this as he walked toward the John Deere, ticket pad already out, pen drawn and prepared to fire away about the man's transgressions.

"Runs jusht like a deer, don' it?"

That was all it took. Todd bit his tongue to try and keep the corners of his mouth from curling up, but the gravity of the situation was overridden by the human need to find humor wherever one could in life. He had learned that long ago in the 1st Air Cav in Vietnam. Life sometimes was just a bitch. He was at the age where he could take one of the State Trooper retirement packages, but after the loss of his wife and two children in an auto accident several years back, Todd had thrown himself into his work. A drunk driver had crossed over the line at the crest of a hill and Samantha had died instantly. The children never regained consciousness before they passed away.

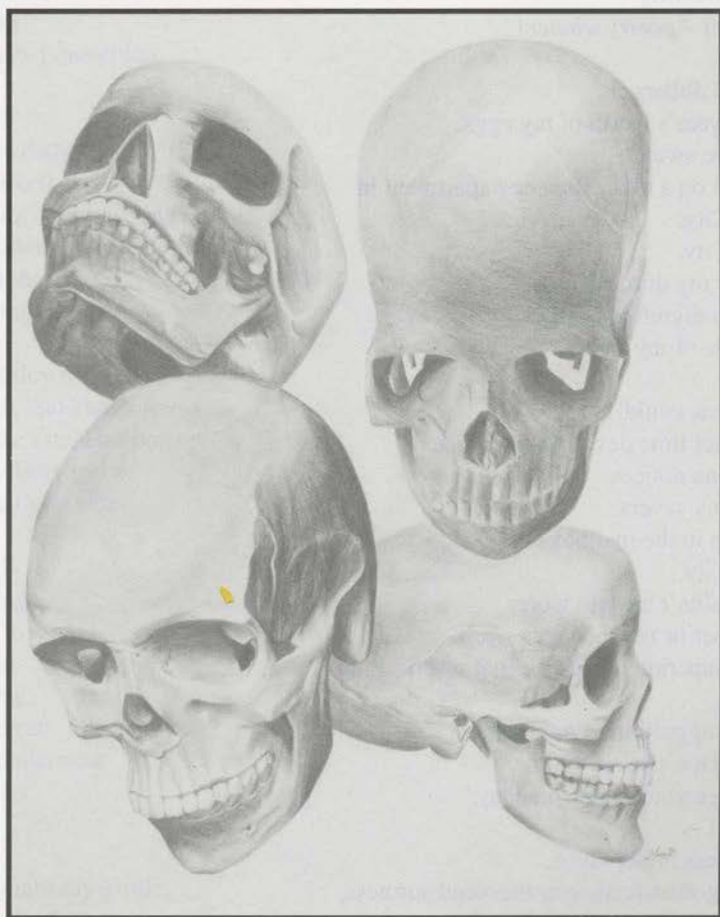
"Well, maybe not exsactly like a deer, but ith still goeth pretty good, don' cha think."

Todd regained his composure as he sternly responded, "Sir, I realize this is a small vehicle, not even intended for road use, but drinking and driving is unacceptable, and against the law, no matter what the circumstances."

"But I only had a coupla beers. Honest, offisher."

Todd let the big guns fly. "That is exactly what the man said who crossed a yellow line and hit my wife and children head-on. Killed them all, so, Buddy, I'm the wrong person to try out your 'couple beers' defense on, okay? Now get off the lawn mower and I'm going to have you walk a straight line for me."

Ryan 'Ox' Patterson began to realize he might be in trouble. The problem that he encountered with many of his escapades was, that, even though they were often much talked about; the reality that was slowly sinking into his 34 year old head was that most people were laughing at him, not with him. "I ... ah ... I'm real shorry about your family, shir. I hope you know I had nuthin' to do with that, an' ... an' ..." Ryan held out his arms to the front, "an ... I'm ready for you to 'rrest me. I need shome help, shir, I really do." Ryan's voice broke and a tear was slowly winding its way over the top of his cheekbone. It came to a halt in his unshaven stubble.



**JACQUELINE UNDERWOOD**

*Los Muertos (Study of Skulls)*

Ebony Pencil



**Biological Destiny**

*(Judy Rogers – poetry winner)*

For \$60,000 dollars  
I can sell a year's worth of my eggs.  
I could move away  
and pay rent on a nice efficiency apartment in  
New York City.  
New York City,  
where, after my third divorce,  
I could die a dignified death  
in the middle of my living room,  
face up,  
so my tomcats could  
have an easier time devouring my face  
before anyone notices  
that the penny savers  
are piling up in the mailbox.  
New York City,  
where I wouldn't have to worry  
about whether or not the pipes work  
(they have superintendents for that sort of thing).

I make the suggestion to my mother  
who says, "Don't be silly.  
You'll change your mind someday,"  
but I can tell  
by the softness in her voice,  
that low forgotten-feather-in-the-wind softness,  
that she is more cynical than I am.

**Dinner Preparation**

Your boss is coming to dinner?  
You, me, and your boss,  
what a threesome!

I am bound  
to the children's soccer practice  
and the cleaning schedule,  
but I'll cook up your meatloaf  
just the way you like it.

Well, if I can't get it done  
in my hot oven,  
then you can  
break my new bone china.

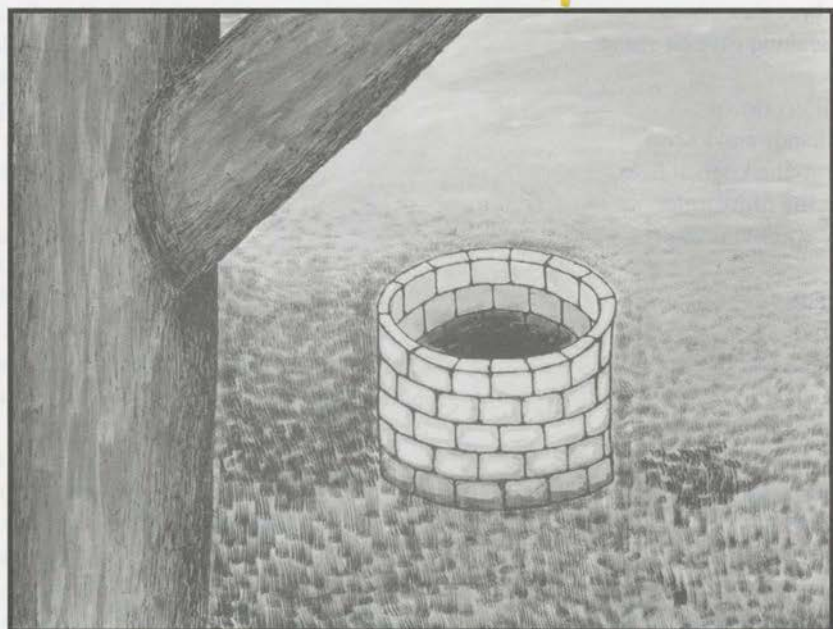
Oh, Daddy!  
The kids are calling.  
They're hooked  
to my umbilical apron stings,  
so I'll send them to my mother's  
before I get that  
good cleaning rhythm going.

Yes, I'll get down  
on my hands and knees  
and scrub the kitchen floor.  
I'll lick the filthy toilet  
if that's what you want.

I'm blinded  
by the garbage,  
so I'll take that out,  
beat the dust  
out of the rug,  
and rub and rub  
your dirty underwear  
until it comes  
clean.

I'll squeeze into my girdle,  
strap on my heels,  
and fix my face with that  
blood red lipstick you like.

Do me a favor  
when you get home.  
The dog has been  
a bad, bad girl  
and needs to be punished.



DANIEL KELTNER

*Untitled*

India Ink



## Minarets

There stands  
a minaret in my landscape.  
Five times a day  
I am called to kneel before it.  
Five times a day  
I comply.  
The Tower of Virtue  
looks God in the eye  
and everywhere  
moist, empty caverns quake.  
Salty hymns surge into my mouth,  
merge with crimson, mosaic lattice,  
but my essence is not elevated,  
and I am no more in tune with  
the syncopated rhythm of God,  
and still  
I am called,  
and still  
I pray.

BRANDY EDEN

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### Don't Give it Up:

#### Owning and Claiming Virginity

*(Judy Rogers Prose Winner)*

Although it was changed for the purposes of printing the program, the actual title of my paper is "Fucking Virginity: Society's Way of Screwing Virgins."

Saving yourself until marriage is something that I never bought into. Not because I wanted to have sex before I was married, but because I could never understand who I was saving myself for, and why that my virginity needed to be saved. The abstinence programs have turned virginity into a shiny, gift-wrapped present to be given to the husband after marriage. The only value virginity has is how much it is worth to the person you are giving it to. The abstinence programs are undermining the value of virginity by making it something to be given away. If the gift is so precious, why not keep it for myself? This led me to ultimately ask myself, why does society want me to give my virginity away so much? Through exploration and analysis of feminist writings, historical figures, and examination of pop culture, I think I've found the answer.

How sex works in society forms the foundation for virginity and concepts that surround it. Essentially, men desire females. Female bodies fill men with the burning desire to fuck them. The desire for their bodies makes men dependent on females to fulfill this desire. Being dependent does not allow men to dominate. Therefore, men eventually come to hate females in that they hate that which they desire, and do not just want to have sex with her,

but fuck her. "Fuck" implies certain harshness around sex. Sex becomes course, rough, and painful. "Fuck" implies possess. Andrea Dworkin wrote "men possess woman when men fuck women because both experience the man being male" (64). Women experiencing maleness essentially stops the woman from being female. She ceases to be an individual and is filled with him, "she is taken over" (64).

Andrea Dworkin wrote that the desire for women leads men to kill women, and in killing women bring them back to human status. The desire itself must transform a female then. It could not just be the physical act of having sex that transforms a female. It has to be the projection of desire on her by a male. The desire is projected, she then becomes the object of desire, an object to be fucked, an objected fucked, then human. Mission Accomplished!

Perhaps this is why society is in such a hurry for girls to become womanly. As soon as she becomes an object of desire she can be fucked, possessed, and brought down by male domination. As soon as possible, females are to become the object of male desire. This is the first way that society undermines its own value on virginity. The gift must be made attractive to a male.

The concept goes back to what value virginity holds. Society has not allowed the full extent of the value of virginity to be revealed. What this has done is create a stigma around virginity that is crisscrossed with currents that are congratulatory and those that are mocking. Abstinence is valued, but so is sex. Virginity is worshipped, yet mocked by calling virgins girly, and not fully woman. In order for society to have both, marriage is key. Marriage ties into male domination and male desire to possess a woman. For all intents and purposes, marriage is a way for men to possess a female more fully. Taking her virginity implies that she has never been transformed into a "woman" by any other male. A degree of competition must be present in order for this to work. Assertiveness of the alpha male to the others in bringing home his prey is shown in the flaunting of the white dress in weddings. He needs to forcefully assert that this is a virgin; he is the only one who will ever fuck her.

The value of domination in society is not something to be taken lightly especially for virgins. Virginity is a chance for men to dominate. And dominate first. Why is it that men wish to dominate? It is set out in the desire of women making men dependent on them for sex. If the desire is there, the dependence is there. Sex is necessary to get rid of the desire. Men cannot dominate and be dependent. And unless I'm experiencing patriarchy wrong, men want to dominate and finish first. Virginity is almost a game, a progressive ritual that begins at the hunt. Females report a sense of being worn down by the male (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Sharpe, Thompson) A hunt is not a hunt without a chase. What fun is it if they do not put up a fight? Struggle a little? Pretend they don't really want it? Once the object is then caught, it can be penetrated, stuffed and placed on a wall as a trophy. The movie *Sorority Boys* is a good example of this. The movie features a fraternity house where the treasurer of the fraternity traditionally has a bulletin board of all the women photos he has had sex with. The domination factor in virginity is that he would be the first to dominate her. In a society where first place wins and everyone else loses, being the first to penetrate a trophy would be a great value. Patriarchy is structured so that men dominate, and virginity must follow the domination rule. Overcoming desire, penetration, and allowing her to feel maleness wholly, allows him to dominate.



## MISTY SKAGGS

*Hear Me Roar*

*Judy Rogers Video Production Award, Co-Winner*



Dworkin wrote that when a female is “fucked” a man enters her, possesses her, and defines himself by her. As long as his desire is there he will hate that he defines his masculinity in her. It is mandatory for women to lose virginity and make sure they do not know the power they have over men. In order to make sure women do not ever find this power, sex must always been seen as being possessed, and sex must always mean being fucked. Men feel as though they have a right to a woman’s virginity and become angry when they find that “her body was not mine” (Dworkin, 17). In relation to sex, patriarchy turns men into carnivorous killers wishing to strip women of their femaleness. Sex itself is violent and almost cannibalistic in nature. Men wish for a woman to become part of them so badly they feel as though they must absorb their flesh into theirs. For instance “eating her out” is ironic in the way that men actually wish to eat her and take her flesh as his. Imagine then how angry virginity must make patriarchy. A virgin who at some point becomes the object of desire for a man, is at risk for violence. How dare this female not allow a man to rid himself of his desire and once again dominate society?

Christine De Pizan in “The Book of the City of the Ladies” wrote about the story of Cassandra, the Noble Trojan Virgin (notice the irony of ‘Trojan’), who “never desired a man as her ruler”(Pizan, 106). In the movie *Troy*, starring Brad Pitt and Orlando Bloom, portrayed her a different way. She was a priestess who stupidly devoted her life to the worship of the sun god. In the end, after being captured, she was no match for the witty repartee of Brad Pitt. He fucked her. The movie portrayed her as always wanting to surrender to the domination of a stronger nobler male. Cassandra was not allowed to live as a virgin by modern culture’s rules. She had to submit to a dominant male figure and like it. Is modern culture creating a society full of willing sacrificial virgins? Arguably yes, since abstinence movements are producing virgins are to sacrifice their virginity to allow a man to dominate her. Virginity is succumbed to the desires of men. It has sacrificed itself to patriarchy and become something to barter with.

So you’re probably asking, “How then should we view virginity?” Virginity has integrity in and of itself. Female virginity does not have to in some way be related to masculinity in order to have value. “Virginity is in not yet having been subsumed: one’s being is still intact, penetrated or not” (Dworkin, 113) By this standard, one could have had sexual intercourse and be considered a virgin, as long as her person is still intact. First the value of virginity needs to be established outside of men. Modern culture has created a virginity that is seemingly worthless something that allows females to be devalued. In retrospect, modern culture had to place some sort of high value on virginity in order to go to such great lengths to knock it down. Females who sign on to the abstinence programs are surrendering the rights to their virginity over to someone else.

How should the value of virginity be measured then? Contrary to modern belief, I would argue that the value of virginity could be placed on something that lasts much longer than the hymen does in sexual intercourse. Modern culture believes that once a female has had intercourse she is no longer a virgin. However, what if it is possible to have been “fucked” in every sense of the word, and re-claim virginity? To, as Dworkin would say, not being connected to something by anyone else? The real value of virginity is the sense of being allowed to connect to the world and nature without having to connect to something else first. Its value is beyond the measurements of sex and patriarchy. In order for men to continue to dominate society, the idea of virginity must continue to be something that is given away by girls. If women do not allow men to possess them, fuck them, and define

their masculinity through them, they can remain virgins forever. In essence, society has ruined virginity. Virgins are fucked before they ever have sex. They are already possessed in every sense of the word, and they are forever connected through the world through their male counterparts. Remaining a virgin is important to keep the integrity of one's own body and to own it. Virgins and women should stop being fucked by society and connect to sex and life without the help of a male.

## MISTY SKAGGS

### **Chevy's Birthday and a Ford**

*(Judy Rogers Prose Co-Winner)*

Vonda leaned absent-mindedly on the counter picking pieces of dried out pizza dough from under her bright red Lee® press-ons. She had been on the clock since six a.m. when she single-handedly unloaded a truck full of boxes stamped with brightly colored labels screaming the names of all the toppings Americans love. Mushrooms! Sausage! Green Peppers! Every frozen clump of future pizza made her sore back ache. She couldn't even stomach the shit anymore.

"Half the time my hair smells like marinara," Vonda said.

Finally, it was getting closer and closer to eleven, closing time. Her exhausted eyes refused to leave the ticking, neon clock that hung crookedly above Pizza Inn's front door. She willed it to move just a little faster with all her tired might.

"Ten more minutes," she mumbled only half under her breath. Vonda had fallen into the habit of talking to herself lately. She'd been lonely and menopausal and feeling restless. The restlessness was what unsettled her most, made her stomach flip-flop. Maybe it wasn't the marinara at all.

"Ten more minutes and I'm out of this hell-hole 'til Mondaaaaay night."

The restaurant was quiet and empty for the first time all day. Lunch crowds composed of bitchy secretaries and grumbling construction workers had faded out. There were no more roaming, old man hands sliding tips into her tight-fitting black Wranglers®. The scent of pepperoni and stale ranch dressing remained, intermingled with industrial cleaning products and stale cigarette smoke. Vonda heard the two boys in the back breaking down the prep table as they argued loudly about last night's ball game.

"I wonder how Stan's doin' with the kids tonight." She picked stray pennies out from under the cash register and deposited them in her apron pocket. Vonda had left her long-time, live-in boyfriend watching the grandchildren. Stan could be irresponsible; his age was catching up to him. And he was still running from it as fast and hard as he could.

"They probably had fudge rounds and Mountain Dew® for dinner!" she huffed. "He better have put the young'uns to bed by now! Eleven o'clock! Chevy's got a big day tomorrow." Vonda's mind always wandered to her family before she left the restaurant and started a familiar drive down Highway 15 to the camper trailer she called home. She thought about Chevy reaching into her apron pockets to retrieve a couple dollars she left there for him every night. She thought about Stan's salt and pepper mustache brushing against her cheek when he kissed her hello and her big, black cat rubbing up against her weary legs. Vonda knew they needed her. She knew she was the aging, cracking glue holding these dysfunctional lives together. She trimmed Stan's mustache and made sure



Chevy washed his hands before devouring leftovers she brought home. She was the one to sneak Smokey's special cat pills into a can of tuna like a nightly ritual.

All the other waitresses had left hours ago. Friday was a busy night in ways that extended beyond bussing tables. Those girls were college girls with extra-curricular activities and homework and well-built, fraternity boyfriends to attend to. But Vonda was the reliable closer, an eight year veteran of the Pizza Inn who depended on her tips to keep the cabinets full. In fact, Vonda was a career waitress. She got her first job out of pure necessity. She was young back then, hopeful. When her boyfriend ran off she realized her parents weren't the kind of folks who could help her raise a bastard son. Vonda had been serving customers since the age of fifteen. That greasy spoon diner job had paid for Little Sammy's first day of school outfit – the cutest sailor suit! Vonda still had the picture she'd taken of him climbing onto the bus in a faded frame. Years of practice ensured that she knew the nighttime restaurant routine like the back of her tanned, wrinkled hand. It wasn't much, but she was proud of that.

In ten minutes, seven minutes now, she would flip a switch behind the counter and turn off the sign outside, which technically read "Pizz Inn." The blinking, cursive "a" had gone out six months ago and no one ever did get it fixed, though Vonda had scaled a shaky ladder in an attempt to do it herself. On a normal night, she would lock the front doors with a heavy key attached to an even heavier key ring. Vonda would punch her familiar time card and turn the sign over from a welcoming "Come On INN!" to an emphatic "CLOSED." Then she'd send one of the rowdy teenage cooks out to the parking lot to warm up her old Ford pick-up as she counted the cash register with practiced speed. But not tonight.

"Vonda! Could I speak with you before you leave?" The manager's high-pitched, nasally voice floated up to her ears and interrupted the autonomous train of thought she had been riding.

With a heavy sigh, Vonda shuffled from behind the counter and made her way back through the kitchen to his cramped office. The "office" was decorated sparsely with pictures of an ugly, red-headed kid who bore a striking resemblance to his ugly, red-headed father. Vonda thought his coloring skills, displayed on a cluttered desk, were less than impressive even for a five year old. "Mr. Whitehead" was another thirty-something; straight out of business school and biding his time until he could find that perfect job. Brad? Benny? She never bothered learning first names anymore.

After nearly four decades of waiting tables, managers never intimidated Vonda. She doled out "Yes, sirs" and "No, sirs" the same robotic way she handed the customers extra napkins to be wadded up and thrown away. She couldn't afford to refuse extra shifts when a girl called in sick on her birthday or her anniversary. Hell, she couldn't even remember her own "anniversary" anymore. The boss knew these things and the boss used her like those white scraps littering the dining room floor.

"Yes, Mr. Whitehead?" Vonda asked after she pushed his door wide open.

"Come on in and have a seat for a second, Miss Vonda!" Benny Brad was always too chipper for Vonda's tastes. The first time they had met she extended her hand for a professional shake and he threw his pale, freckled arms around her in an awkward embrace, too friendly to be trusted. She fully understood the importance of politeness in a world based on making people happy but a pasty, flabby guy like him completely lost track of personality. He was the bottom of the barrel in her mind's eye. A faceless blob who spent his days rolling around a dirty restaurant - begging forgiveness to rude old women and



offering free pizza and cold Budweiser® to men who might offer him a leg up in the world. He didn't understand what it was like to struggle; he only understood her eagerness for over time.

"Sure thing, Mr. Whitehead!" Vonda threw a response full of posed perkiness right back at him and settled into a worn dining room chair opposite the desk. As he worked, she pushed her disgust for Whitehead's pit stained shirt to the back of her mind.

Benny Brad turned back to the adding machine in front of him and crunched through another page of numbers while Vonda fiddled with the frayed cuff of her jeans, feigning patience. She stared blankly at the pictures on the desk and thought back to a time when her own children were losing their first teeth. Those gap-toothed grins had been sunlight in her dark, monotonous existence. Vonda knew she hadn't been the best mother. They moved around a lot and money always got tight at the end of the month. Her kids never had much of a father figure to look up to, but goddamn, she had loved those babies enough to fill the hole.

These days it felt like a different life, a life with her youth so far away she could barely recall it off in the distance. Sammy and Paul and Junior and even her little girl, Vondalene, had children of their own now. In turn, Vonda had grandchildren to dote on and she spoiled them rotten at every given opportunity. Everyone wanted to spend the night at Granny Vonda's house! Cartoons blared and there were always kittens or puppies to play with, sometimes maybe even a baby duck swimming laps in the bathtub.

Chevy, the oldest of her five grand children would turn seven on Saturday. She had planned an elaborate party. Vonda could admit to herself that he was her favorite. He was always so eager to help out with her backyard garden; his big brown eyes looked up at her from a dirty face, full of questions. She thought about the way she would ruffle his thick, black hair and he'd throw lean, strong, little kid arms around her waist and whisper "Love you, Granny" so the other kids couldn't hear.

She tapped a long, fake fingernail on Whitehead's desk and thought about Stan at home on the couch with the TV blaring, probably smoking up all her weed and laughing hilariously at David Letterman.

"Mr. Whitehead..." she began.

"Vonda, please! Call me Brandon already!" he looked up, smiled at her nervously and rubbed one pudgy hand through his thinning, ginger hair. Brandon! She knew it was a B.

"Sure thing, Brandon." Vonda didn't bother with her patented "hope ya'll are enjoyin' your meal" smile this time. The black circles under her eyes betrayed her impatience and he cleared his throat.

"We're gonna' need you here tomorrow, Vonda." Whitehead dropped his beady eyes back to paper work, thinking her answer would be an instant affirmative.

"What now?" Vonda asked, straightening herself up in the chair. Her posture was suddenly impeccable and she knew the look of a worn-out waitress had left her, been lifted away by thoughts of birthday candles and ice cream.

He cleared his throat one more time. It was a funny sound, almost a squeak coming out of the fully grown man in front of her. Vonda felt her heart sink and trained her piercing brown eyes on him. She stared right through the crooked tie and button down shirt, waiting. The air in the room got heavier when she breathed out deeply, pausing, giving him a chance to be human and change his mind about one lousy extra shift.



**ALEX HALL**  
*Kentucky Women*

*Judy Rogers Video Production Award, Co-Winner*



"Well you see, Laura Fay can't make it in tomorrow..." he shuffled papers and looked down into his lap, brushing imaginary crumbs from his crotch. "Laura Fay can't make it in tomorrow, I believe she's sick. And I'm going to be out of town for the weekend at a management conference. I sure could use somebody who knows what they're doin' in here!" he faked a sickening laugh. "You know how busy we get on Saturdays in this town."

Laura Fay wasn't one of the young, blonde, college girl waitresses. They came and went as quickly as delivery specials. Laura Fay was the leggy, brunette assistant manager who owned more cosmetics than Mary R. Kay and had been working at Pizza Inn for about three years now. Vonda knew Brad Benny here had been fucking her for the past few months. All the employees knew about it, Laura Fay wasn't exactly discreet and neither were the rainbow of lipstick prints she left on Whitehead's collar. Gold Dust, Pink Paradise, Strike-A-Pose Rose; all smeared into Brad Benny's sparse goatee every day after their "shift meeting". Vonda wondered what kind of example he was setting for that ugly kid of his. For a split second, she thought about Chevy with his gangly height getting a hold of Brad Benny Jr. and kicking the shit out of him on the playground.

"Now listen here Brad..." she began.

"It's Brandon, Vonda." He tried to smile but her voice plowed him over and wiped his face clean.

"Honestly, I don't give a shit, Brandon. I'm off tomorrow. I put in for the day off with Laura Fay herself almost six months ago."

Whitehead looked shock. The other waitresses flirted with him, complimented the pictures of his rotten kid. Vonda was here to do her job. She had never raised her voice to him, never refused a painful double shift no matter how much her feet hurt. Vonda was not the kind of employee to whine about working the holidays. But behind the long-term server and model employee, Vonda knew she never did have the patience to brown nose. She knew that family had to come first this time.

"Now Vonda, there's no need to use that kind of language. I don't mean to upset you. It's just that...AHUM...it's just that something came up."

"Oh I just bet it did, Whitehead. Like it came up in the break room? And the walk-in cooler? And in Laura Fay's car out in the parking lot?" She didn't even stop long enough to allow a reaction. Brandon leaned back in his cushy office chair, shocked and embarrassed. "I've worked every weekend for the past five years. Every single damned weekend. And I'm off tomorrow, that's all there is to it."

"I'm afraid you're being irrational here. You are working tomorrow Vonda, if you want to keep this job." Whitehead's threat sounded thin, he was sweating hard now and dabbed at his forehead with the end of his "PIZZA INN!" tie.

"Now I wonder if Laura Fay's going to that conference? Will ya'll be sharing a ride, Brad? Maybe a room too?" Vonda couldn't stop now. She felt anger growing in her belly and it felt good. She'd been feeling numb for so long now, floating around without an anchor in a world of extra cheese and Dr. Pepper® and fake friendly.

"Now that's enough!" Whitehead squeezed his gut out from behind the desk and got on his feet, raising his voice. Vonda rose too, taller than him, stronger than him; she leaned over and slapped her palms face down on the desk.

"Am I on the clock tomorrow, Mr. Whitehead?" her voice was low and menacing. She forced eye contact with the man and saw his fear, his sheer surprise. A picture of Chevy's shiny, blue bicycle flashed in her mind's eye.





**RIA KEETON**  
*Harmony with Contrast II*  
 Black & White Photograph

*Judy Rogers Art Award, First Place*

Mr. Whitehead sunk into his chair like a deflated balloon. He picked up a stack of papers and shuffled them, straightened them in an attempt to look officious and important. "No, Vonda, I don't believe you are. And I don't think you need to bother coming in on Monday either."

Just like that, her career at the Pizza Inn was ended. Vonda nodded and turned slowly on her heel. She shuffled out of the office and heard Brad Brandon exhaling. The relieved sound of it followed her out through the kitchen.

"Miss Vonda, should I go on and start the truck for you? It's cold tonight!" one of the cooks patted her on the shoulder as she floated by. She threw her hand up in dismissal and threw the heavy key ring on the counter.

Vonda stepped out into the cold and walked toward the truck. She grabbed tonight's tips out of her front pocket and untied the uniform apron, letting it fall to the ground in the middle of the wet, frosty parking lot. She settled into the truck seat and cranked her defrost up to the highest setting.

"I've still got a cake to bake tonight." Vonda said out loud to herself. Chevy wanted a race track and she'd bought a selection of Hot Wheels® cars to decorate with.

For a moment, she thought about Stan again. She thought about the way he'd given up on finding a new job since the potato chip factory closed down. She thought about repo men showing up at the camper with dollies to wheel her TV away. She thought about the weather and the smell of cheap, kerosene heat. She thought about all the bills that would have to be paid. Vonda hunkered down to peer through a small hole in the icy windshield. Revving the engine, she looked out over the tired small town. Restaurants lined Main Street as far as the eye could see. Vonda remembered how she'd stenciled Chevy's name across the wide handle bars of his new bike with shiny enamel paint.

"Green's his favorite color" she mumbled as she put the beat-up, full sized Ford into gear and smiled. She tromped down on the gas pedal, gaining speed slowly across the slick lot. When the Ford started to skid, she braced herself, both hands on the steering wheel. Her thin body only bounced a little when the front end of her truck collided with the wide windows of Pizza Inn; windows that she had cleaned so diligently only a half an hour ago. Streak free glass rained down over the hood of her truck and Vonda heard a girly scream from inside.

"You're a tough old piece of shit, aren't you?" She complimented the vehicle as she threw it into reverse and patted the dash board the way she'd pet her favorite, mangy cat. The hood rattled just a little bit in protest and the cooks peeked around the corner out the busted window. Vonda waved and saw the boys laugh, shaking their shaggy heads in confusion and disbelief.

"I don't think Benny Brad will be making it to his conference" Vonda said as she laughed low and raspy. She lit a cigarette with one hand and spun out into the dark street, humming "Happy Birthday."







KAREN S. JORDAN

*Untitled*

Papier-mache Diptych

*Judy Rogers Art Award, Honorable Mention*

Gwyn Hyman-Rubio Interview

RA: Gwyn, How are you doing?

GHR: I'm doing fine.

RA: Well I have a couple of questions about your writing process. Do you write everyday?

GHR: Yes, I do. I try to write everyday. I think it's good for anyone who is serious about writing to get into the habit of writing. Even if what I write is...even if I throw the pages away I would have at least gotten in that practice and have written something even if the pages are no good I try to write everyday.

RA: What is a typical writing day for you like?

GHR: My rule of thumb is four pages or four or five hours whatever comes first and then I quit. That is when I have the luxury of taking my time, but when I have deadlines to meet and I'm lagging behind then I'm putting in up to ten hours of work or more. It's not a good way to write when you're pushing that high because I think because your mind kind of turns to mush after you've worked that long, but when you have a deadline to meet that is what you have to do. Like right now I have a novel due February the first and so I am working very long days and even on the weekends... there is no time off.

RA: So, It can be a definite grind sometimes?

GHR: Yes, I don't like to work this way. I do believe that one has to get into the habit of if writing and if one wants to write one needs to write everyday, but I don't believe in pushing like this I think it's probably not a good thing.

RA: So how does a Gwyn Hyman-Rubio novel come to be? Do you start with a plot, concept, or a character?

GHR: I always start with a character because it is the characters in my writing that drive everything. I think in a way the characters and the plot or the events come almost simultaneously, but usually the characters first. I have to have the character driving the plot because everything revolves around the character. So I write from character so that is pretty important that is what I start with first. I'll usually start thinking about particular character in a novel for about five or six months before I ever put pen to paper. Trying to think about it and know who my major characters and my minor characters will be. I like to get to know them inside and out before I ever begin the writing process.

RA: Do you have a way of getting to know them?

GHR: I think about how you get to know real people. I try to know them that way. I want to know what their likes and dislikes are. What are their strengths and weaknesses? What they look like...their favorite color. I try to know every little thing about them. What their emotional triggers are. What are their defining traits? Let's say you had a character that is always biting the inside of his cheek...that will be one of those little habits...in a novel that will be...the moment you say "bit the inside of his cheek" people will say "Ah, okay" that will become one of those telling traits of that character. I kind of try to get into all of that.

RA: I really picked up on that in *Icy Sparks*. The character of Icy is definitely a well drawn character. As a little girl from Eastern Kentucky who suffers from a neurological disorder, Tourette's syndrome, she is a very strong character. I have heard you speak about your own struggles with your own neurological disorder, epilepsy. I wondered how much of those experiences were interwoven or influenced Icy's experiences?

GHR: Well, I don't think I could have empathized or tried to empathize with a little girl with Tourette's syndrome unless I had grown up having a neurological disorder myself. I think it would have been more difficult for me to empathize and identify with a little girl with Tourette's syndrome and so I certainly know from having grown up with epilepsy I know what its like to lose control. With epilepsy you know have seizures and you lose control and I know what that's like so I could identify with a little girl who had Tourette's syndrome and could just lose control. So I think in many ways that feeling of growing up with epilepsy that I always felt quite different. I had some strange behavior as a child and my epilepsy was not diagnosed until my thirties so no one knew quite what was going on. So I think that helped to identify with Icy Sparks and someone having to deal with Tourette's syndrome.

RA: What I admired most about the character of Icy was her strength and determination to not let the opinions of others define her. She eventually learns to accept herself through healing power of song. The healing power of art is something I've heard you speak about before. Is that something that the message you were trying to convey through *Icy Sparks*?

GHR: I think that is very insightful because that is one thing I am talking about is the healing power of art. When I started the novel I was in one place emotionally by the time I finished the novel I was in another place. So I think as I wrote the novel I did begin to heal myself or as the little girl Icy began to go in that direction but I realized some of that was because I began to heal myself in some ways and I think the novel was a real catharsis for me in that way. It was very healing thing and I began to think about that kind of healing power of art and that the writer can heal herself or himself in the art and when the product is finished the novel or the painting or whatever then you have something you can give back to others and perhaps help others come to terms with themselves and help heal themselves through that novel or piece of art.

RA: Do your characters sometimes take you places that you don't expect?

I expect it. I guess with *Icy Sparks* when I started out I knew who my protagonist would be.



I knew it would be this little girl with a neurological disorder growing up in the mountains of Eastern Kentucky in the 1950's and I knew everything about her, but I had a sudden idea because I don't outline. I wouldn't follow an outline anyway. I let my characters take over and kind of write the novel. There is that magical point in a novel where the characters are speaking so loudly to you that the characters just take over and write the novel at some point. Before I went into that magical place I had a certain idea about how I wanted the novel to end and it was a much bleaker novel and a much darker novel, but about midway through the book Icy became so real to me and she took over so completely and the world that I had created it took over. Then Icy just grabbed me and said, "No, this is not how this novel is going to end. I'm going to tell you how it will end." So the novel did end up quite differently then I had plan.

RA: How did being selected for the Oprah Book Club affect your career?

GHR: When *Icy Sparks* was chosen to be a part of the book club, it had gone into paperback. The hardback had been remaindered and I was actually worried about keeping the paperback in print. I was an unknown writer and this was my first novel and sales were modest, but *Icy Sparks* had gotten good reviews. It was a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers, New York Times Notable of 1998, and New York Times Editors Choice of 1998 so it had gotten good reviews. But the sales were really modest and I was concerned about keeping the paperback in print and then I got the call from Oprah and of course the book stayed in print. The positive thing about that is that I was very worried about breaking in with my second book because things have changed in the world of publishing now. It was not only that do you have to work really hard to break in with your first book. It took me ten years to break in with *Icy Sparks*. I had four novels shelved. My mentors were telling me if it took you ten years with *Icy Sparks* it will take you twenty with your second ... if you break in at all. I was afraid my career would be over and then I got the call from Oprah. So the first thing I thought is now maybe Icy will stay in print for a while and now maybe I can get a second book. Actually, I think the world of publishing the business part of it has gotten almost dysfunctional ... like a big dysfunctional family. I think it's just not how it use to be where you use to have an editor or a house for life and people were supportive and publishers treated writers as human beings and now writers are commodities and I don't think this is a good thing. I actually wish that Oprah could choose every book by every writer that comes out because I think everyone deserves that kind of readership ... if they've worked hard. It's just kind of unfair what is going on in publishing now, but the positive thing was that people read *Icy Sparks* because of what she said. Still, [*Icy Sparks*] had earned the credentials but people weren't reading the book. The down side is if you're an unknown writer breakings in with a first as an Oprah choice people recognize the book they don't necessarily recognize the name and there is some fear that you could be type-cast. There was some fear that I would repeat myself as a writer like people would come up to me an say, "Is your next book going to be a sequel?" you know Icy gets married and has a family. I think if you're a serious writer you want to challenge yourself you don't want to repeat yourself over and over again. So I do think it is a double edge sword. Very positive experience and I would so it again, but I didn't want fall into the trap of repeating myself over and over again.

RA: Do you believe in writer's block?

GHR: Of course I believe in writer's block. Hyman, wrote a book *No Time for Silence* and it was hugely successful and success. It was that block that I blanked from writer's block and I have suffered from it been very lucky.

RA: Are there authors that you particularly like?

GHR: I am a very eclectic reader. I like writers. But you know...I grew up reading O'Connor, Harper Lee, and William Faulkner. My father's like William Stern, Mary McCarthy wrote about the mountains so that was in my mind and telling me what I needed to read a lot of European writers a lot of British writers.

RA: Do you have any advice for authors?

GHR: Well, I think that you learn to read a lot. You need to read both fiction and non-fiction. You need to read from the good books and what not. If you study the technique of how they write and read them carefully with that kind of process...with every novel you write is a lot of the craft involved. So you find an agent who is as young and as old as you are.

RA: Thank you Gwyn for taking the time.

GHR: You're welcome.

RA: Do you believe in writer's block?

GHR: Of course I believe in writer's block its one thing that killed father. My father, Mac Hyman, wrote a book *No Time for Sergeant* it was published in 1954 when he was only 31 and it was hugely successful and then he blocked because he could not deal with the success. It was that block that I blame for his death. I know too many writers that suffer from writer's block and I have suffered from it myself. Those who say they haven't have been very lucky.

RA: Are there authors that you particularly like to read who influenced you?

GHR: I am a very eclectic reader. Whoever I'm reading at that time is my favorite writer. But you know...I grew up reading Truman Capote, Tennessee Williams, Flannery O'Connor, Harper Lee, and William Faulkner a lot of Southern Literature. Also friends of my father's like William Stern, Mary Lee Suttle, and Reynolds Price. Now Mary Lee Suttle wrote about the mountains so that was my taste in that. My father was always putting books in my and telling me what I needed to read and willing read a lot. I am currently reading a lot of European writers a lot of Booker prize winners.

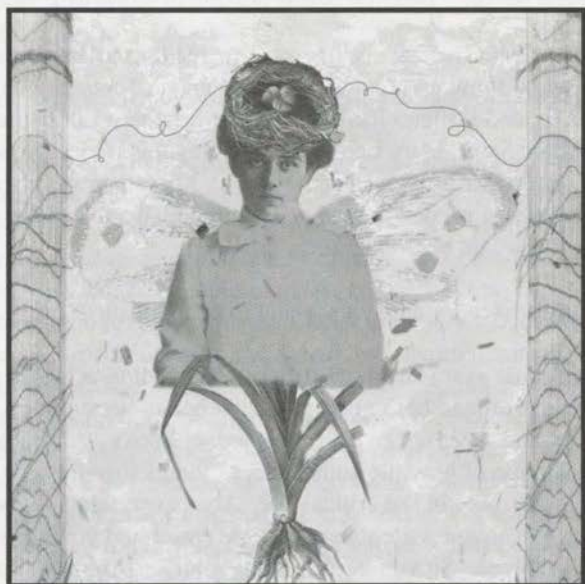
RA: Do you have any advice for authors seeking to get published?

GHR: Well, I think that you learn how to write by reading a lot...so all writers need to read a lot. You need to read both good and back books because you learn what to do from the good books and what not to do from the bad books. All books help you learn if you study the technique of how the author pieces things together you will grow if you read them carefully with that kind of critical eye. Also, everything you write is a learning process...with every novel you write things become easier and you grow as writer...there is a lot of the craft involved. So you need to write a lot and you need to read a lot. Also find an agent who is as young and as hungry as you are and just stick to it.

RA: Thank you Gwyn for taking the time to talk with me.

GHR: You're welcome.





## JENNIFER SPADE

*She*

Digital Collage

*Judy Rogers Art Award, First Place*



# CONTRIBUTORS

**Rachel Abernathy** is a senior at MSU and she writes and resides in Owingsville, Ky.

**Jeremy Akers** is a writer from Hazard, Ky.

**Brittany Applegate** is an art major at MSU. She draws a lot of alternative girls. She also does some tattoo type art with banners and such. She tries to mix the two together sometimes to create something more interesting.

**Clark B. Basil** has a Master's Degree in Theatre from the University of Kentucky and a Master's Degree in Communication from MSU. He teaches public speaking, oral interpretation, theatre and health communication at Pikeville College in Pikeville, Ky., as well as coaching the speech team. In 1983, he won grand prize in the Performing Arts Repertory Theatre (now TheatreWorks, USA, Ny.) for his play *Change of Exchanges*. In 2001, his story "The Town Drunk" was included in the *World's Best Shortest Stories* published by Quality Paperback Book Club, Ny. In 2005, he co-authored *Poetic Healing: A Communication Journey from a Vietnam Veteran's Perspective*, published by Parlor Press. His interests lie in writing, gardening, backpacking, art and spending time with his grandchildren.

**Harry Brown** is retired from the Eastern Kentucky University English department and continues to teach part-time. His latest book is *Felt Along the Blood – New and Selected Poems* (Wind Publications).

**Lauren Buck** is a graduate student at MSU studying adult and higher education. She is a graduate assistant in the Office of Student Activities and the advisor for Delta Gamma Fraternity.

**Courtlyn Caudill** is an MSU student.

**Stephen Creech** is an artist whose current work is an attempt to purge fears by analyzing their absurdity. By means of rational reconstruction, his pieces are intended to dissipate social control.

**Colin Daugherty** likes to challenge himself, so he does. When you get into your 2nd and 3rd year here at MSU the climate turns very political, so some of his stuff reflects that kind of environment.

**Brandy Eden** is an MSU student.

**Laura Eklund** has published poems in the United States and in the United Kingdom, including an anthology. She is also a painter. She lives and writes with the poet, George Eklund, and their children in Olive Hill, Ky.

**Nate Elam** is an MSU senior majoring in English, and is from Ashland Ky. He is currently studying creative writing under Crystal Wilkinson, and hopes to have a future as a writer.

**Frankie Finley** is an active member of the Southern Appalachian Writers Cooperative. She enjoys kayaking and traveling with her family. She lives in Lexington, Ky.

**Mandy German** is an art student at MSU. As part of her 35mm photography class, she's recently begun working with portraiture in a studio. She has jumped in headfirst and is very excited about her opportunity to explore the various results of working in a studio setting.

**James B. Goode** is a member of the Kentucky Philological Association.

**Stacey Greene** is a native of Greenup County, Ky. She is currently a freshman English major at MSU.

**Dale Greer** is a member of the Communication faculty at MSU. He is a former television writer, producer, reporter and anchor. He was voted into the MSU Alumni Hall of Fame for his accomplishments in the field of broadcasting.

**Alex Hall** is an MSU student.

**Jordan Hampton** is a graphic design major at MSU. His current projects are all over the place. He has been doing a lot of experimenting with different media and styles, always learning.

**Laura Haywood** is currently pursuing a women's studies minor, which has inspired a lot of woman-centered art ideas and projects that address social injustice and inequality issues.

**Sarah Hill** is from Prestonsburg, Ky. She is an undergraduate student at MSU where she is majoring in French and English. She lists among her favorite authors Allen Ginsberg and Toni Morrison.

**Britney Huron** is an environmental science major at MSU. Her current projects include corn hole boards, family portraits, and quilt squares for barns. She believes that dissecting every possible viewpoint is essential to understanding and painting our world.

**Karen Jordan** is currently pursuing an MA in Art P-12, with a studio option. Her work has always been about her home and family. She enjoys artwork that has narrative to it, and is trying new themes for inspiration, such as purely aesthetic concepts in art without any meaning.

**Ria Keeton** is a university studies major, with a minor in professional and technical writing. She hopes one can learn to sink or swim in the world of studio photography, because she just threw herself off the bow.

**Daniel Keltner** is an undergraduate student at MSU pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art. He states that his drawing is of a "recurring nightmare when [he] was younger."

**Dusti Rose Lewis** is an art major at MSU and resides in West Liberty, Ky.

**Casey McCown** is an art major at MSU and she creates art from her home in Clearfield, Ky.

**P. Andrew Miller** is associate professor in the Department of Literature and Language at Northern Kentucky University where he teaches creative writing and literature. His poetry has appeared in *The MacGuffin*, *Someone has to Die*, and *Blue Writer*. He has also published fiction in a variety of venues and genres. He has been reading his creative works at the annual conference of the Kentucky Philological Association for many years.

**Kristina Helene Montesi** is a junior English major with a creative writing minor here at MSU. She is very passionate about her family, friends, and writing. These three necessities have helped her push her way through. She is attending school to get her bachelor's degree and will shortly be moving to Santa Fe to pursue her life goal as a movie director. She hopes to be working under the likes of Darren Aronofsky, Wes Anderson, and Michel Gondry.

**Ivy Oddis** is a student at MSU and her current project is a mental state of transition. She likes to design at 3 a.m.

**Tiffany Oldaker** is currently taking Ceramics II as well as Sculpture I. In her own time she is mostly working on non-representational paintings, as well as developing ideas for a series of paintings she would like to begin soon.

**Sara Perkins** is a biology major, graduating in spring and she lives in Morehead, Ky.

**Steven Rodgers** is a resident of Olive Hill, Ky. and is an art major at MSU. His awards and recognition include 1st place Regional Art Fair in Graphic Design, 2nd place State Art Fair in Graphic Design, the Leadership in Art Scholarship, 2nd place Women's Studies Logo Design, and Art Meets Women's Studies Internship.

**Erica Seagraves** is mainly working with oil paint, creating very expressive and emotional pieces. Lately she has been working on a sequential art series using the untraditional medium, and techniques, of oil paint. Art is a therapy, and she has it to thank for her survival.

**Misty Skaggs** was born and raised on a small tobacco farm in Elliott County. Currently, she is attending MSU to pursue a degree in English with an emphasis on creative writing. Writing about the people and places she loves, has always been a release for this budding, Appalachian author.

**Donna Slone** is a member of the Kentucky Philological Association.



**Jennifer Spade** is an art educator, formerly an adjunct teacher with Ashland Community and Technical College. She completed her Master's Degree in Art at Marshall University and has taught art at the elementary level in Ashland for four years prior to becoming a stay at home mom to Andrew, 16, Emma, 6, and Will, 5.

**Joel A. Spencer** is 30 years old, a senior and should graduate in the spring. He finds writing to be a nice exercise for the mind, a way to release pent up creativity. As an English major, much of his education is based on his interpretations of other works, the only freedom he has is to choose which interpretation he wishes to defend.

**Gloria Stepp** is an art major at MSU, with an emphasis in graphic design. Currently, she is working with color as her primary tool of expression.

**Mark Stevens** is an MSU student.

**Wayne Stevens** is a retired MSU employee and lifetime resident of Rowan County.

**Jessica Stump** is a senior English major at MSU, with minors in creative writing, professional and technical writing, and French. She resides in the small, Eastern Kentucky town of Harold, but has larger aspirations of world travel. She enjoys both reading and writing in almost all genres of creative writing, but poetry remains her love, her life.

**Whitnee Thorp** is a young Kentucky poet who has been developing her skills as a participant in the Governor's School for the Arts. She recently completed a chapbook of poetry title *Spit and the Heavengoing*.

**Gary Walton** is an assistant professor in the Department of Literature and Language at Northern Kentucky University. His areas of interest include modernism, postmodernism, and the Irish literary renaissance. He received a Ph.D. from George Washington University. He is currently editor of the *Journal of Kentucky Studies*. He is the author of four books of poetry: *The Sweetest Song* (Peapod Press, 1988), *Cobwebs and Chimeras* (Red Dancefloor Press, 1995), *Effervescent Softsell* (Red Dancefloor Press, 1997), *The Millennium Reel* (Finishing Line Press, 2003) and one book of short fiction and humor: *The Newk Phillips Papers* (Red Dancefloor Press, 1995). His current work-in-progress is a comic novel about Newport, Ky. in its heyday as a gambling Mecca called *Sin City*. His newest book of poetry, *Full Moon: The Melissa Moon Poems*, is due out from Finishing Line Press in 2007.

**Jacqueline Underwood** believes that imagination is the freedom that influences creative thought, whether it is through words of passion or the tip of a pencil.

**Rana Williams** is a senior history/English major at MSU who writes poetry.

## SUBMISSION DETAILS

*Inscape* is a Morehead State University publication with a long history of cutting edge visual and literary art. Media and genres of work range from prose, poetry, short story, long narrative, non-fiction and creative essays to photography, printmaking, drawing, painting, sculpture & digital art.

The Department of English, Foreign Languages & Philosophy offers MSU students the opportunity to submit work for publication. Students may submit poetry, fiction, non-fiction or drama. The works are reviewed by a panel and top selections are included in *Inscape*.

The Department of Art offers students two opportunities to have their work juried for publication. For every issue, a new guest juror is invited to review the competitive pool of submissions for both the cover design and the visual artwork published within *Inscape*. Their selections help form a unique and diverse issue of *Inscape*.

For specific guidelines and submission dates, visit [www.moreheadstate.edu/inscape](http://www.moreheadstate.edu/inscape).

# 1st Annual Until the Violence Stops Art & Writing Contest



The Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Program solicits poetry, prose, and art (including visual art and performance/video art) from students, staff, and community. Submissions, welcome from both male and female writers/artists, should focus on issues surrounding violence against women and girls.

- Writing should not exceed ten pages in length and should be submitted as an electronic attachment or hard copy.
- Art work can be submitted via slides, CD, DVD, VHS, Mac format disk or actual work. Media and size are open; however, all work accepted must be ready to exhibit.
- Artwork presented under glass frames should be removed from the glass to avoid glare when photographed.
- Art work must be accompanied by a one-page artist's statement explaining how the submission addresses girls/women and violence.

## Fax

Attention: Sylvia Henneberg  
606-783-9112

## Via Surface Mail

Sylvia Henneberg  
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## Submission Options:

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Sylvia Henneberg  
s.henneberg@morehead-st.edu

**Awards:** There are seven \$50 dollar awards. All winners will be invited to present their work at the Until the Violence Stops End-of-Festival on Friday August 31, 2007. Location, date and time to be announced. All work will be returned to the contestants.

**Eligibility:** Members of the community in Morehead and its surrounding counties, High school students in Morehead and its surrounding counties, MSU students, faculty, and staff.

**Deadlines:** For submission: July 16, 2007  
For Notification (by email): by early August

For more information contact:  
DR. SYLVIA HENNEBERG  
Director of Women's Studies  
s.henneberg@moreheadstate.edu  
Phone: 606-783-5228



Women's Studies on the Web: [www.moreheadstate.edu/TWSP](http://www.moreheadstate.edu/TWSP)

DESIGNED BY CATHY E. LADD



# ART MEETS WOMEN'S STUDIES INTERNSHIP

The Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Program and the Department of Art are pleased to offer a year-long internship for an art student seeking to receive credit for Art 400: Apprenticeship.

## PURPOSE:

The student works in close collaboration with the Director of Women's Studies and an Art Faculty Liaison, assisting the Women's Studies Program in the design of its promotional materials.

## ELIGIBILITY:

Art students who have secured departmental approval to enroll in Art 400 may apply for the internship.

## APPLICATION:

Students should submit:

- a hard copy of a sample flyer containing design work and promoting an event of their choice;
  - an electronic copy of the sample flyer;
  - a cover sheet specifying contact information;
  - evidence of departmental approval to enroll in Art 400 for two consecutive semesters.
- Hand-deliver all materials to Sylvia Henneberg, Combs Building 421B, or to Brenda Porter, Combs Building 103.

## DEADLINE:

Application deadline for the 2008/2009 internship is

**Friday April 18, 2008**

## AWARD:

The student selected for the Art Meets Women's Studies Internship will receive a

**\$100 award** upon completion of the internship.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE:

By accepting the internship, students grant Morehead State University permission to publish their work in various promotional or publicity materials for MSU, the Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Program and/or the Department of Art. Furthermore, it is understood that artistic creations may be used beyond the duration of the internship and that interns will not receive financial compensation beyond the stated monetary award for the use of said work in any of the aforementioned scenarios.

For more information:  
DR. SYLVIA HENNEBERG  
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s.henneberg@moreheadstate.edu  
phone #: 606-783-5288

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women's studies is on the Web at: [www.moreheadstate.edu/IWSP](http://www.moreheadstate.edu/IWSP)



Morehead State University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, Vietnam Era, recently separated, or other protected veteran status, or disability in its educational programs, services, activities, employment policies, and admission of students to any program of study. In this regard the University conforms to all the laws, statutes, and regulations concerning equal employment opportunities and affirmative action. This includes: Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Executive Orders 11246 and 11375, Equal Pay Act of 1963, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Kentucky Revised Statutes 207.130 to 207.240. Vocational educational programs at Morehead State University supported by federal funds include industrial education, vocational agriculture, business education, home economics education and the associate's degree program in nursing. Any inquires should be addressed to: Francene L. Botts-Butler, Affirmative Action Officer, Morehead State University, 358 University Street, Morehead, KY 40351. Telephone: (606) 783-2085 or [f.botts@moreheadstate.edu](mailto:f.botts@moreheadstate.edu).



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